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FEATURE DETECTIVE STORY

The FACE in the CROWD

BY MARC EDMUND JONES

"THE MAN IN ROOM No. 7," A Thrilling Detective Story—In Our Next

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THE FACE IN THE CROWD

By MARC EDMUND JONES

CHAPTER ONE.

SKULKING TRAGEDY.

CHARLIE BRADFORD, ex-detective, dropped off a Third Avenue car two squares below that particular street in the Thirties which was his destination. He was fully aware of the danger to himself. Though the Elevated roared overhead in friendly fashion, sheer music to the returned exile; though every shop at this hour of the evening gleamed forth with joyous illumination, yet no spot under the wide skies was quite as unsafe for him as this special neighborhood.

Even before he put foot upon the cobblestones he caught the jazz strain from the great brass band which was the feature of Alderman Cardle's block party. He knew that the narrow street would be a mass of bobbing dancers, of cheek-to-cheek couples welcoming any congestion which served to encourage a greater degree of syncopated snuggling. From the spot where he stood Charlie could see the beginning of the festooned garlands of electric bulbs slung out almost to the Interborough's elevated structure. The massed crowd about the roped-off entrance to the block was plainly discernible. They were the folks clustered to gain their enjoyment of this occasion vicariously.

There was irony in Charlie's situation. As he sauntered up the sidewalk boldly, nonchalantly, he passed Mary O'Grady, whose husband he had saved from the electric chair, and Frank Blenner, whom he had sent up the river for a brief stretch that had been very profitable to that individual. All this was New York City, the world metropolis, but here in particular was Charlie Bradford's section. In this neighborhood he had grown from

adolescence. These people he had big-brothered until in time he had known them all.

Bradford unquestionably had been the best detective upon the city's force. Then Alderman Cardle, for motives never clear to Charlie, had broken him, and Charlie had been sentenced to Sing Sing upon the baldest of trumped-up charges. On the trip up, from an impulse of desperation, he had escaped from the train. From guardian of the law he had become fugitive from justice.

Mary O'Grady did not recognize him, nor Frank Blenner. He had changed in his five years' absence. Was the change sufficient to protect him from recognition, arrest, a long penitentiary sentence? He shrugged his shoulders, pushed through the crowd about the entrance to the closed street, flung a new half-dollar down upon the little table at the opening in the ropes, and entered.

Why had he returned to face this danger? That was a question the ex-detective could hardly answer for himself. In a farther corner of the continent, in Seattle, the unbidden impulse had come to him. With the passing of days it had grown. Finally he had purchased his ticket on the very spur of the moment. Hazily forming in his mind was a determination for self-vindication. While no definite plan, no possible definite scheme had occurred to him he proposed to rehabilitate himself in some way.

Within the enclosure the street was a scene of kaleidoscopic gaiety. Alderman Cardle's house, one of the most prominent in the block even in ordinary daily circumstances, was now outlined with electric lights. Many of the other homes had been decorated, some thrown open to a select few guests, others like the alderman's admitting any or all of the revelers.

Over the garlands of bulbs, stretched at generous intervals all the way to Second Avenue, were countless ends and loops of paper streamers. The sidewalks and iron-railed stone steps and entrance-ways were littered with confetti and bits of the paper ribbon. The asphalt, however, was swept clear by the feet of the dancers. Keeping back from the curb, sub-consciously remaining in the background as much as possible, Charlie made his way to a point opposite the alderman's house. For perhaps ten minutes he stood still, watching the people push in and out the door. In that time he failed to see a single soul he knew.

Then he was aware suddenly of a strange feeling of being watched. So sharp did it come to him that he turned quickly and in that space of a moment he gained a glimpse of a face in the crowd, a face that somehow haunted him; yet it was no one he knew. But for all the shortness of his glimpse he was able to construct a most accurate mental picture. He saw again in mind the broad brow, tapering somehow with hair growing low at the temples so as to suggest cunning rather than high intelligence. He caught once more the cruel twitching leer of the mouth, with the quick view of tobacco-stained stumps of teeth. That was it! On second thought, when he was able to bring the faculty of analysis to bear, he could see that it was the expression of the mouth that made so great a subconscious impression upon him. It was a mouth holding a mocking smile, without mirth. It was as though this intruder in the maelstrom of revelers had recognized Charlie Bradford, and at the realization of that possibility a cold tremor traveled up and down the wanderer's spine.

The next instant he sought to follow the man, to search for him. In the huge gathering it was an impossible task. Another detail of the face in the crowd came to Charlie, however. It was an added peculiarity to stamp the features in his mind. One eye was blue, the other brown. The man's two eyes failed to match, a fact that contributed to the quality of villainy in the expression.

Meanwhile Charlie made his way along the street. If it were possible that he had been recognized it would never do for him to remain in that spot across from the alderman's home. There he had been seen. There he might be expected to remain. All at once he was aware that he was in a break in the swarms of people. Here was a bit of sidewalk almost clear of revelers. With a side glance at the house he was passing he remembered an interesting feature of the street and smiled at this evidence of it.

While the alderman's home was quite the most pretentious residence in the neighborhood, yet across and perhaps half way towards Second Avenue there was another old brownstone that for generations had served as a bogie for the children; and for some of the older folk. Just who owned old No. 240 had never been generally known. In the memory of Charlie it had never been occupied but had stood, boarded up, crumbling in spots; bleak, dull, repelling.

For a while it had been Charlie's theory that it sheltered the activities of a gang of criminals. One of his last acts had been to plan a raid upon the place, a raid which had been prevented by his own sudden troubles. He had not been sure that the criminal gang had any real existence and so, probably, the place had never been investigated. Now he stood, for just a moment, studying out its covered windows, windows shut out from the world for so long that the boards were rotting in place.

All at once he became aware a second time that he was being watched and he turned. Sure enough he was just quick enough to catch that mysterious face melting away into the crowd. And unmistakably he noted the difference in the eyes. One was dull blue, with a dead evil glint; the other brown, too dark to reveal anything but a smoldering animosity.

"Damn it!" the detective muttered, audibly.

Then it struck him somehow that while the man evidently recognized him there was yet no danger from this source of arrest, or of an

alarm sent in to the police. Unquestionably an enemy watched Charlie Bradford. But it was an enemy under cover, waiting for a particular opportunity to strike. Because of that, and because Charlie had an accurate picture of the man's face, he was furnished now with a possible clue to the influences leading to his disgrace five years before.

Somewhere, in some manner, the face in the crowd was a clue to the mystery he had come East to solve. Because it was a cheering thought he began to whistle. He made his way through the throngs skillfully, pressing back towards Third Avenue, once more passing Alderman Cardle's house on the further side of the street.

Then the brass band started up and he stepped to the curb to watch the couples, oddly illuminated beneath the colored bulbs.

"Do you dance?"

A slim little hand touched his arm and he discovered beside him a girl flushed and with eyes dancing, at a fever heat of excitement. At first about to shake his head, instead he slipped a hand behind her back and soon they were out on the asphalt, making difficult progress among the bobbing couples.

"Aren't you taking an awful chance?" he asked.

"What do you mean?"

He had scorned the cheek to cheek grapple of the others and so his mouth was close to her ear; they could talk above the din. "You never saw me before."

"But"—she giggled—"you looked as if you might be a good dancer, and—you are!"

"Thanks! Still to take up with a stranger is——"

"Oh, this is like being at home on this block. I live here and—and besides I'm tired of all the boys I know and"—occasional collisions punctuated all remarks—"and they've begun to fight over who should dance with me and I don't like that."

"Maybe they'll want to fight with me when they see us dancing."

"No, because—well, I won't dance with you again."

"But—but a minute ago you said——"

"Why?" He was discovering that he liked her, and this was disconcerting.

"Because I don't know you."

"It's all right to dance with a strange man once, but—but more than once it's as bad as letting yourself scrape acquaintances, isn't it?"

Before he could answer the music stopped and she tore away, flashing one last laughing glance at him before she melted into the swarms of people—much as that the owner of the mysterious face had eluded him.

But he knew that the girl was slim and trim, and graceful as some wild thing, for he had held her in his arms. He knew, too, that the scent of her hair was as delightful as a wood after rain. Her voice, her laugh, had been as soft as deep-running water. And her eyes, the last of her he had been able to see, had darkened at that upward flash. On his coat still was the press of a little hand.

Four thousand miles Charlie Bradford had traveled to trace down the mysterious unknown enemies who had brought about his undoing. Less than three hours in New York he had—fallen in love.

A sudden hush recalled him to himself. In a moment he saw that all heads were bent towards the illuminated house near the center of the block. There a rather portly and important figure stood, the center of a circle of admirers. It was Alderman Cardle and he was going to say something to them.

Striving to press through the throng, so as to hear, Charlie yet felt it would not do to make too much commotion or to attract any attention to himself. His progress therefore was slow. Before he was within hearing distance the politician had concluded and the brass band once more had begun its lusty production of jazz. Nevertheless the alderman continued to stand on his porch, watching the dancers, and so Charlie pressed on.

"Bathhouse Cardle," as the alderman was popularly known, owed his great support in his district to the measures he had initiated for the benefit of his constituency. One of these had been public bathhouses in the East River, resulting in the nickname. Among citizens of other sections of the city, however, Cardle was not regarded as more than a cheap politician and he had never been able to make an appreciable advance in politics. Now he stood still, swaying back and forth slightly in self-satisfaction, watching these folk as a shepherd might watch a flock of sheep.

His enemy! From a vantage point in front of a house opposite Charlie watched the man who had broken him, studying out the red cheeks and nose, the puffed small eyes which distinguished Alderman Cardle. Perhaps two minutes elapsed, in which neither moved.

Then from somewhere behind Charlie there came the quick short bark of a shot, reverberatingly loud even above the brass instruments. Hardly a second afterwards Charlie was aware that the alderman had crumpled up; had collapsed upon his steps. Some one had killed Bathhouse Cardle! In an instant pandemonium reigned. Out of the confusion came the news from those closest to the stricken politician. From mouth to mouth the word was repeated. Alderman Cardle was dead.

Charlie's first thought was one of elation. He started to press forward. Then came a sobering realization. The shot had come from some place not so far from the spot where he stood. What was to prevent his own arrest? His experience had shown him that a case of this kind would not be likely to produce the guilty man at once,

if at all. His own hatred for Cardle was known. If caught here it might go very bad with him.

Hastily, but carefully, he made his way east once more, towards Second Avenue. Because most of the others were pressing towards the center of excitement it was hard. Yet he made progress.

Then a hand caught his arm and his heart dropped with a quick qualm of fear. The next instant he saw it was the girl.

"What—what happened, man-I-danced-with?" She seemed worried.

He smiled slightly, but checked himself. It would not do to let any one know he felt a sense of retribution in this affair.

"A man was shot."

"Who?"

"Alderman Cardle."

"Oh—oh—God!" She swayed.

He caught her. "What's the matter? Can I do anything?"

"It's my father," she moaned. "I'm Alice Cardle!"

CHAPTER TWO

THE MAN WITH THE RED STUBBLE.

A SUDDEN thrill went through the former detective. This girl the daughter of the man who had been his greatest enemy! Just a moment before he had been ready, almost, to rejoice at the tragedy. Now the ingrained instincts of the policeman came to the surface, the mental attitude which has made the New York policeman the finest in the world. After all this was crime. In spite of the fact that it was the girl's father, without consideration of the extreme personal danger which would result if he hovered in the neighborhood, Charlie Bradford determined to run the murderer to the ground.

As he held Alice Cardle in his arms, momentarily, there came also the recollection of her. But five years ago she had been a child, in knee dresses and with hair down her back. She had been the favorite of every policeman, every fireman, every city employee. Once word had gone about that she had confessed, naively, to her own preference. Charlie Bradford had captured, single-handed, the half-crazed slayer of a pawn-broker on Thirty-fourth Street.

"When I grow up I want to marry Detective Bradford," she had said.

Now—now she didn't know him. Now she had selected him, as she thought a stranger, to dance with in a moment of caprice.

"Listen," he began, tightening his grasp, "I'm——" Then he checked himself. He could not reveal his identity.

But his words recalled her to herself. She saw she was in his arms. In spite of her grief she colored, pushed away, disappeared in the throng before he could stop her or say anything further.

"I'll find the man who shot Alderman Cardle," he muttered to himself, determinedly, "even if it means I serve that term in Sing Sing."

He started toward Third Avenue once more without any clear idea of method or purpose. Had he been Detective Bradford, officially assigned to the case, the procedure would have been simple. By this time both ends of the block would have been guarded, to prevent the departure of any one until the end of the preliminary investigation. The houses on the adjacent streets would be searched for suspicious characters, on the theory that the murderer might have made his way through some house, over back fences and through rear courtyards. He himself would hurry to the side of the stricken man, seeking eye-witnesses to the shooting and searching out possible motives for the crime.

But all that was impossible now. Charlie Bradford must remain a fugitive, even as the murderer himself must evade the police. And it was under such circumstances that he undertook to solve the murder of the girl's father, his former enemy.

All at once a figure in the crowd struck his eye and in that brief second his training as detective served to give his first shred of a clue. It was not the owner of the face which twice had discomfited him but another man, also a stranger. This individual was short, stocky, and decidedly stoop-shouldered. His clothes were cheap but neat and his shoes, from which the real detective can gather more than from any other detail of wearing apparel, indicated neither the laborer nor the flashy youth of the immediate neighborhood. There was something middle-class and respectable about the man, yet something furtive. What had caught the eye of Charlie Bradford, however, was a full two days' growth of beard, a red stubble that might have been carelessness and untidiness in another man; not in one as otherwise neat as this.

Here was a neighborhood festival. Alderman Cardle had advertised this block party for months. Gathered were all the youth from a mile radius, dressed and prepared for this dance and general good time. The man with the red stubble obviously was not a resident of the block. His actions were not only furtive, they were uncertain; as if the arrangement of the houses was unfamiliar. Charlie was sure he was a stranger. If so he had not come to enjoy the festival. If that had been the reason for his presence he would certainly have shaved. But there it was, a two days' growth.

With a grim smile the ex-detective took up the pursuit of the other, not certain the stranger had any connection with the murder, sure, however, that this was better than doing nothing, better than waiting further in aimless fashion for something to turn up.

The man with the stubble was not aware he was followed and Charlie was skilful at shadowing. Together they wormed their way through the

crowd towards Third Avenue, until they were opposite the alderman's home. On this side of the street there was quite a crowd, watching the scene of the tragedy across from them. The police were not in evidence on this walk, however, and the curious bystanders were not interested in anything going on behind them.

Charlie's quarry hesitated for several moments. He cast a furtive glance towards the windows of the various houses. Then with cat-like quickness he stepped back, darting down a basementway, disappearing through a grilled iron gate which apparently was unlocked.

Though it meant unknown dangers, though he was not sure that this man had any connection with the murder, yet Charlie followed. Opening the iron door, stepping through the entrance into the basement, he paused in the darkness, listening, watching. He was alert, but unarmed. He had no possible means of protection. Soon he caught a slight sound ahead which he identified in a moment as soft footsteps upon cement, but there was no light, no other indication of life and activity.

Moving himself upon tiptoes, making no sound at all, Charlie maintained the pursuit. For several moments he felt his way forward in the narrow passageway; then he paused to listen again. Now there was no telltale movement before him. Had he lost his quarry? He pressed forward again; stopped a second time. Suddenly there was just the faintest suspicion of light ahead, a rather strange phenomena as though the slight illumination came from far to one side and was reflected upon a swinging door. The next instant a dark shadow passed before the light and turned and it was clear that there was an entrance to some further division of the cellar.

Hurrying, Charlie found the door. Listening at the panel he caught no sound from the other side. Opening it the tiniest fraction he was able to distinguish no further trace of the faint illumination. What next? He pushed through, turned in the direction the shadowed figure of the man had taken, pressed forward again in the darkness.

With grim unexpectedness he detected the breath of a living thing close to his ear. Almost at the same moment there was a rush of movement and he was set upon, his arms caught and pinioned by an invisible antagonist. He had walked into a trap.

But to the man once a member of the New York police department there was no such a thing as surrender. He remembered a trick taught to a number of the men of the squad with which he was trained. Tightening his muscles, then loosening suddenly and at the same moment dropping to his knees, he ducked out of the grasp of the other. Of course it was only a momentary respite and he was crouched low upon the floor, a bad position at the best. Yet his attacker had lost the advantage of surprise.

Waiting, listening, Charlie jumped to his feet suddenly and squared off, alert. At that instant a blinding light was flashed in his face and he heard voices.

"It's Bradford! It's Charlie Bradford, all right!"

"Get him! Get him behind, Jim!"

At once it was apparent that there were two of them. The flare of the electric torch blinded him. Unarmed, it seemed a hopeless situation. But Charlie instinctively did the one thing which gave him a fighting chance. Without thought, without consideration of consequences, he dove directly into the light, groping for the man who held it. By a freak of good luck his outstretched fingers struck the face of his victim, the tip of one finger grazed an eyeball, scratching it with his nail. The pain must have been severe, for there was an agonized cry and the torch was dropped to the cement, where the impact broke the filiment of the lamp, extinguishing it.

Drawing back, wheeling about, Charlie lunged out in the direction from which he believed the second voice came. Again good fortune directed his blow. His knuckles came against the side of a man's jaw, grazing the cords of the neck and striking with telling force against the vulnerable spot just behind the ear. A groan followed, with a quick intake of breath.

The ex-detective waited for nothing else, but turned and ran in the darkness. After three or four steps he slowed, groping for the wall and door. Soon his fingers caught the former, but there was no sign of the opening. Was it to the right or the left? Behind him came a scuffling, as of some one getting awkwardly to his feet; another of pain. Then:

"Where is he?" some one whispered. "The torch! Get him, Jim!"

Charlie started along the wall one way. Four, five feet. No sign of the entrance to the room. He faced about and groped along in the other direction. He was sure now that he heard the others stealing upon him, but he could not move faster for fear of running into something in the dark. All at once his fingers caught the frame of a door; he grasped the knob. With silent expression of relief he opened it softly and slipped through. Then—it was to the right, of course—he started to run again in the dark, knowing that there were no obstructions in the hallway, realizing that he would have to get some sort of weapon or make some preparation for self-defence before he could accomplish anything in this trap.

But he had hardly taken half a dozen steps when something caught him at the waist, a hard, cruelly unyielding surface of some sort. So great was his momentum that all air was driven from his lungs. He was half thrown over forward, and both arms were plunged up above the elbow into cold, clammy water. In an instant he understood. It was not the same door he had slipped through. This was a laundry, or at least here was a stationary washtub half filled with water and soaking clothes. And before he could

straighten or extricate himself he heard a whisper again.

"Sh! Did you hear that?"

As quietly as possible, realizing from his pain that he had bruised himself badly, he drew up and back against the wall.

"I didn't hear nothing. He got out the other door, I tell you."

"Aw, strike a light!"

"And let him plug us?"

"What are you afraid of?"

"His gun."

"He ain't got no gat. He'd a-had it out."

Silently Charlie slipped to the floor where he stood. There his hands struck something soft. With a sense of realization of continuing good fortune, he saw that it was quite a pile of unsoaked clothes ready for the tub. Still without sound he managed to work his way behind and under the tub, to pull some of the clothes over him. Then he heard the scratch of a match and soon grasped that a flickering gasjet illuminated the room.

"There you are, nobody here!"

"Well——"

In the pause Charlie could see nothing; he hardly dared breathe.

"What next, Jim?"

"The girl, of course. Think I'm going to give her up?"

"You are going to keep her?"

"That's what I mean to do."

"But with all the cops——"

"That don't make no difference."

"But with her dad croaked, Jim——"

"Wasn't it all her part of the program. D'you suppose old Bathhouse would stand by and let her disappear?"

Charlie nearly gave himself away then and there. It was Alice they talked about! They threatened danger to Alice Cardel. He strained to listen now.

"The old house, then?"

"Yep, same as arranged."

"Won't the cops search every house?"

"Not that dump."

"They'll keep on looking for the guy as croaked old Cardle."

"And they'll find him, out in the crowd."

"You mean they'll get 'Chink'?"

"Naw! Chink was going to do the croaking, but he didn't have to."

"You mean——"

"I mean 'Chink' himself saw the whole thing. Just as the gang had t' get that old fool out of the way along comes a guy with an old grudge and does it. And the police are wise and aren't looking for 'Chink' at all."

"But 'Chink,' Jim——"

"I know all that. 'Chink' had his gat and was watching his chance and—and everything. But the guy as killed Alderman Cardle was Charlie Bradford, and don't you forget it!"

CHAPTER THREE

UNEXPECTED INGRATITUDE.

A DISTINCT qualm of fear crept over the hidden ex-detective. He had realized that he might be suspected of the murder, but it was nevertheless disconcerting to have his possible guilt thus stated as a fact. But the consideration of his own safety remained uppermost in his mind for only a brief second. These men threatened danger to Alice. Their remarks confirmed him in the belief he had held long ago: that there was a gang here and that their headquarters were in that old boarded-up brownstone house—in any case he guessed that to be the place to which the two men had referred. More, the reference to the alderman had opened a new line of thought. Evidently Cardle had been in with the criminals hand and glove. If that were so it would be an explanation of the alderman's interest in breaking Detective Charlie Bradford, in putting that star of the police detective force out of the way. Charlie had planned to raid the old brownstone. Only the charges against him had stopped his arrangements.

And Alice! If her father had been a criminal——

Charlie Bradford knew it would make no difference to him. In the few brief moments he had held her close in the dance he had known that she was the mate for him, even as she—in her girlish fancies—had declared him to be the man she wished to marry. For her own sake he would run down the murderer of her father. Because it was the instinct of the policeman he would see that justice was done, even if it ruined the name of her parent; but the girl he would shield, and cherish, and love, and protect—forever.

These reflections occupied the space of a second. Then Charlie was aware that the two men were about to leave the room.

"You'll meet me there, Jim?" came the first whisper.

"Do just as we planned first," rejoined the other.

A lessening of the light even through the clothes piled before his eyes prefaced their departure. Then he heard the slam of a door.

For a while he waited, to be sure. Then he moved, slowly. Nothing happened. Throwing off the material, extricating himself from behind the tub, he straightened.

The men had left the gas in the room, turning it low, and he saw that it was a laundry and quite a small chamber. What should he do now? Probably the best thing would be to proceed to the brownstone house where he expected them to bring the girl. If possible he would get in somehow and seek to prepare a trap. To that end he must get a weapon and—he looked about—it would aid him if he could possibly disguise himself a bit.

The pile of clothes caught his eye. Though it

was dangerous to remain here it was doubly dangerous to go out upon the street and subject himself to instant recognition. Poking through the pile quickly he found a flannel shirt and, hanging up in a corner of the laundry, he saw an old coat and cap. With inspiration he donned the flannel shirt over his own. He turned up his trousers until they rode above his boot tops. He put on the other coat and the cap. He used his own tie on the flannel shirt. Then, though he had no mirror, he knew that with this rig and with the flush of color from his five years in the West, he would have every appearance of a Second avenue youth of a gangster type he had known by the hundreds. It was a marvelously convincing disguise through its very simplicity.

Concealing his own discarded garments beneath the pile of other clothes, he stole out to the street cautiously; more at ease now with a weapon in the shape of a short section of iron pipe borrowed from the laundry also, where it had been wired to a broken valve handle. Charlie Richards, unofficial detective, was ready for operation.

Out on the street there was no more of the gaiety. The members of the brass band were lingering, forlornly, uncertainly, although they had packed up their instruments. While some one had shut off the current in the festooned bulbs above the street, the lights illuminating the outlines of the house of the stricken alderman still blazed full, casting a strange glare upon the somber faces about.

There was no lessening of the crowd. Whether the result of morbid curiosity, or the result of police restrictions holding every one in the block until the search could be concluded, it was something Charlie was unable to tell. He dared not approach the ends of the street. At the same time there was another task before him.

It was comparatively easy for him to make his way towards Second avenue, until he was in front of the unoccupied house. He was able to be sure, also, that he was not followed. But how to get into the place.

Finally he remembered a passageway through an apartment building three doors to the east. He sauntered into this casually, then hurried into the back courtyard of the structure, waiting. Again there was no sign of shadow or pursuit. Selecting the darkest spot at the fence, he drew himself up and dropped, a good seven feet, into the adjoining yard. Beyond that was a shed, and he crawled across the roof, praying that he might not be silhouetted against a light. Another drop followed, landing him in the rear of the house he suspected to be the gang headquarters.

Once more he drew back into the darkness, to await any sign of discovery. None came. And in the interval, during which he watched the old home, there were no indications of life within. Waking to action suddenly, he attacked the problem of gaining an entrance. With ridiculous ease, using the bit of pipe as a lever, he forced in the rear basement door.

Then because it had been so easy this far, he drew back into a corner of the cellar room, every faculty on the alert, determined that each move should be made cautiously and carefully. No sounds, no light came to guide him. Yet there was an intangible something about the place which told of recent human presence. Principally there was the lack of the musty smell of unoccupied residences. Then—he was not sure—there was the slightest odor of tobacco, and again not the scent of unemptied ash trays or the dry, ancient tang of a place long used by smokers.

Still nothing warned him of any immediate living presence. With the bit of pipe in hand, with outstretched arm to ward off unexpected obstacles, he felt his way about until he located the stairs to the first floor. Glad that all the old New York brownstones were designed on the same general plan within, he made his way cautiously to the front door. Still without light, using his hands to feel, he discovered that there were heavy bars here, fastened firmly in place. He grinned, for it was confirmation of his conjectures. The doors were reinforced in preparation for a raid.

Stooping, he dragged two fingers along the floor for a bit. Almost no dust! Had this been a bona-fide unoccupied house the floors would hardly be this clean. But used for illegal purposes, it was necessary in the days of scientific study of finger-prints and foot-prints to avoid dust above everything else in the world.

How the criminals gained egress to the house he did not know nor care. Holding his extemporized weapon under his arm, he removed his shoes and slipped them each into a pocket of his coat. Very noiselessly he stole up to the second floor. With extreme care he opened the door of the front room. Here was the dull sour smell, not of a room unused, but of a room which had been occupied with the windows boarded up and no ventilation—the stale reek of human being.

Charlie started for a second room, but at that moment there was a slight sound from below, and he hurried to the bannister instead to watch. Soon the oddly flickering shadows from a moving light struck here and there on the walls. After some moments a little group appeared from the basement, proving that entrance to the house was somewhere on the ground floor. Holding his breath, watching through half-closed eyes so that even the gleam of his glance in a lantern light might not attract attention, he saw that there were two men and one girl. She was struggling.

At first he was not sure it was Alice Cardle. Then as she bent back her face was upturned, and he could catch every agonized feature of her expression. The girl he loved! He set his muscles even as he waited. Next he was aware that they were coming up the stairs. He drew

back, and on noiseless stockinged feet made his way halfway up to the third floor.

As he hoped, they stopped at the second. The faces of neither of the men were discernible from his position above them, but that was a matter which did not interest him just yet. She screamed, and as they muffled her cry brutally he felt his blood course hotly through his veins. The one man in the lead opened the door of the room Charlie had been just about to investigate. Dragging her in, the second man stopped to close the door after them, and the hallway was in Stygian darkness once more.

Was Charlie Bradford, with a piece of iron pipe as a weapon, an equal to two men presumably armed and desperate? For her sake, yes!

He stole down the half flight of stairs, approaching the room cautiously. Just before he reached the entrance the door opened, and in the flood of illumination thrown into the hall one of the two men was to be seen clearly. It was he of the two days' growth of red stubble. For an instant the gangster was revealed as sharp as the figure in a portrait of oils. Then he closed the door and was in the dark with Charlie.

Charlie did not wait, but stole up. Just as the other flashed his electric light, fortunately in the other direction, the ex-detective raised his crude weapon and struck one sharp blow, realizing that he must bring the man down swiftly and silently.

The gangster crumpled up without a sound. Working feverishly then, Charlie put on the flash, and after appropriating the man's revolver and placing it ready for instant use he proceeded to truss and gag his unconscious victim. Finished, he grinned with momentary satisfaction. Then, weapon in hand, he approached the door, opened it softly, and entered.

At a table a man sat leering at the girl, who was tied lightly in a chair facing him. Charlie had thought, somehow, that this would be the man whose face he had seen in the crowd. Instead it was a gangster he knew well by sight, Jim Richards by name, evidently the one called Jim by the other of the two in the darkness of the basement less than half an hour before, the Richards who had been serving a ten-years' term in the penitentiary at the time of Charlie's disgrace and escape from his own sentence.

Now Richards failed to realize that any one had entered the room. He sat staring at Alice Cardle, his naturally evil features distorted more than ever by a swollen and bloodshot eye, the result of his encounter with Charlie.

"What do you say?" he demanded coldly.

"You can't mean that, Jim Richards! You—you have tried to make every one feel you owned me ever since I first put my dresses down over my knees. And you have tried to put your arm about me, to kiss me, to force attentions upon me when—when I loath you. But—but you can't really mean that you will——"

"You're damn lucky I'm willing to marry you, little spitfire!"

"But—but——" She struggled piteously.

Charlie felt his blood boil. He advanced into the circle of light.

"Hands up, Jim Richards!" he demanded grimly.

The gangster complied. Yet he did not show any signs of fear, perhaps not knowing that his accomplice was already helpless, perhaps knowing of other assistance which could come to him. For an instant he studied Charlie's face behind the weapon. Then he smiled sourly.

"Charlie Bradford," he remarked coolly enough. "Twice in one night."

At Richards' identification of the newcomer Alice turned sharply in her chair. Her expression, however, told Charlie nothing. With one hand to keep Richards covered he released her with the other. Then, at his direction, she triced up the gangster, gagging him as the man in the hall had been gagged. Finished, she faced Charlie curiously.

"You—you're the man I danced with," she said finally.

He nodded.

"And," coldly, "you are Charlie Bradford, the detective that once was my girlhood ideal?"

He nodded again, puzzled at her coldness. Then he started to take her arm, but she drew away.

"You are going to take me to the street now?" she asked.

"Of course!"

He led the way with the torch. Yet he still felt a queer sense of restraint on her part, and it worried him.

"You don't think I was guilty in—in those things which were charged against me?"

She didn't answer. It had never occurred to him that any one believed the charges—the crime had been accepting a bribe, alleged, in connection with a murder case—and on the way down the dark stairs he was silent, crushed. But as he conducted her out the basement door to the street another greater surprise awaited him. Suddenly, very suddenly, she seized his arm. Though a girl, she brought all her strength to bear. And she raised her voice to a scream.

"Police! Police!"

Alarmed, he placed a hand over her mouth.

"For the love of heaven," he ejaculated. "What's the idea of that?"

With a woman's inconsistency she stopped to explain.

"You are Charlie Bradford," she asserted accusingly, "and you are the one who shot my father." Again she raised her voice. "Police! Police!"

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BLUE-COATED RING.

AGAIN he sought to put a hand over her mouth, but this time she struggled, continuing her cries. So unjust was this repayment of

his rescue of her, so wholly ungrateful, that for several moments he stood foolishly, allowing her to awaken the night with her calls for help.

Only when the people near by started to rush in to help the girl, only when he had a glimpse of the first policeman, did he realize the slight chance he had of escaping arrest now, thanks to her. The darkness of the street with the special illumination out, the denseness of the crowd even yet, offered him his only opportunity. He shook her off with ease and leaped straight at the nearest man of those coming for him. With the true psychology of mobs this man and those immediately behind him made way before Charlie's rush.

Then he turned quickly, running sideways, doubling back, slowing to a walk, slipping rapidly among a chattering group of older women, strolling nonchalantly by two officers hurrying to the scene of Alice's cries.

His mood was twofold, the immediate danger over. First an intense disgust had come over him. Why had not Alice Cardle trusted him at least a little bit? Why had she been so sure he had killed her father? Why had she acted so treacherously in leading him to the street so she could call the police? But more than ever he realized the foolhardiness of remaining here now while there was a great hue and cry, a particular search for him.

He would return to his hotel and make proper preparations for the long search and investigation he proposed to undertake. If necessary he would grow a beard or in some way would disguise himself sufficiently enough and effectively enough to avoid such danger as this in the future. He could serve Alice Cardle, against her will if necessary, but not by allowing himself to be arrested and sent away to Sing Sing for a long period of time.

He took his way unobtrusively to Third avenue and there made a rather distressing discovery. The police, as he might have anticipated, had closed the end of the street. Every one leaving was examined under the glare of the corner arc and was questioned carefully.

Dismayed, Charlie turned back. Because Alice had called for the police on the one side of the street he crossed to the other, the side of Alderman Cardle's house. Though he had no anticipation that he would be able to leave the block at Second avenue, yet he dared not omit making the attempt. But there, as at Third avenue, was the cordon of police.

Was it possible to get out some other way? With a flash of inspiration he remembered the passageway through the basement of the apartment building, the route he had taken to get to the rear of the old brownstone. He crossed the street. He prepared to seize an opportunity to dart down the narrow stairs when unobserved by the throng of people still upon the sidewalk.

Almost in the instant he was about to make the break there came to him the old sensation of being watched. Almost frightened, he raised his eyes to find his intuitive fears fulfilled. There, just melting away as he looked, was the face in the crowd, the face of the man with one eye blue and one eye brown. In those features was the expression of malice or sardonic understanding. Who—who was this man that recognized him? Another of the gang?

Refusing to acknowledge fright, or any sense of defeat, Charlie hastily mixed with the crowd once more, to lose the shadow. For nearly ten minutes he wove this way and that. Finally he felt that the other had lost the scent. He returned to the apartment and dropped down the basement entrance directly and without hesitation. Scaling the fence at the back of the areaway, he dropped into the rear of a structure on the next numbered street above. Now it was only necessary to find a way through to the front, and his escape to his hotel was easy.

But there was nothing about the first house, nor the second, to give him much hope. He knew that all New York houses were built squarely against each other, yet he knew that some very few had open passageways, principally apartments. After scaling ten different high wooden fences he found a way through. He stole forward cautiously, only to see a policeman on patrol, another further down the street. Then he understood that his worst fears were realized. A blue-coated ring had been established about the entire block. There was no escape for Charlie Bradford here.

Yet should he say die? He squared his shoulders, rescaled all ten fences, retraced his steps back under the apartment to the street filled with strangely quiet and upset revelers. At first he thought his return was unobserved. He planned to cross over to the other side, there to see if he could not find a way through to the adjacent thoroughfare, all in the hope that the police line might be broken somewhere, in the knowledge that he could not give up and quit.

But as he glanced about he caught a fourth glimpse of that face in the crowd, with the result that his blood ran cold, and an instant later upon top of that Alice found him.

"There!" She pointed, rushing for him. "Here! Here's the murderer!"

With nothing to do but take to his heels, Charlie did so. This time the crowd was not massed so that he could not lose himself in the swarm of people. Instead they strung out after him, like the chase in an old-fashioned movie comedy. Indeed, some of the more venturesome spirits attempted to intercept him, so that he had to make use of fist and shoulder, so that he had to menace his pursuers with the revolver which still remained in his possession.

Such a pursuit could only last a moment, and Charlie Bradford knew it. On the same side of the street as the Cardle home was a house where the family and some of their friends still sat out on the porch, watching proceedings. Now the

police in his wake could not fire at Charlie because of the crowd. But in a moment, if he got into the open, he would not have that protection. So upon mad impulse he darted up the steps of this house and into the front door. There was no time for thought or anything but snap judgment. Once inside he bounded up the stairs to the second floor, up the next flight to the third, and there—as he had hoped—he found a ladder to the roof and ascended that, closing the trap behind him.

Still there was no time to lose. He ran to the edge of the roof, found he could climb over to the next house, that he could in fact make his way from roof to roof for more than half the length of the block. This was a new possibility of escape. If he could elude his pursuers and reach either Second or Third avenues, he would be able to find some hiding-place to serve until the police net was withdrawn, to serve after it became daylight.

But as he jumped over the brick barrier between two of the roofs his foot slipped and he was plunged forward upon hands and knees, upon chest and face, as he was unable to stop himself in the first sprawl. This dive upon the rough gravel lacerated his hands and cut his face, hurt him so cruelly that he was stunned for several moments.

When he began to recover his faculties he was aware of voices and he realized that his pursuers were searching the roofs. Afraid just now that he might not possess the physical strength to elude them if they saw him, he crawled towards the front of this particular roof, with an idea of hiding. There was no shelter. Meanwhile the voices came closer. At last he clambered over the top of the cornice and lay on the desperately narrow ledge immediately above the street, four stories high.

It was a place they would never think of investigating. And for a moment Charlie enjoyed his precarious position of advantage. Below him the people were small figures, hurrying now to the police lines at both avenues, anxious to get home as soon as possible. Whole sections of the street were empty, too, save for the wreckage of revelry: confetti, paper streamers, any amount of gaudy debris.

Then Charlie became aware of a sudden crumbling beneath him, and he realized that the ancient tinwork of the fancy cornice, never meant to bar his weight, was giving way. Slowly it began to cave here and there. He could do nothing but cling and pray. For an instant he was supported as upon rubber ice. Then a slight sound accompanied a fall of perhaps five or six inches. The top of the ledge had collapsed to the supporting timbers within the old cornice.

While Charlie had not been in real danger, it had been startling enough to cause him now to go white, to lie still for several minutes without motion. Then he crawled up carefully, suspiciously, with a swiftly beating heart, and dropped back over the top to the safety of the roof.

In the distance were the calls of the searchers. He was not free from danger yet. But a new plan occurred to him. Under shelter of the brick wall separating the roof from that of the next house, he made his way unobserved to the rear. Here, as he had hoped, there was a lower section of roof, over a wing of the house which did not rise to the three-story height. Letting himself over the edge of the top roof carefully, he dropped to the other. Then he remained crouched for several moments, revolver ready, to learn if he had been seen or heard.

Nothing happened. He glanced about. Here were two windows in the third floor of the house, both in the same room apparently. There was no other lower section of roof, no way of descent from this place, but the chamber within was lighted, and although the shades were drawn he decided to demand admittance, trusting that he could frighten the inmate sufficiently to allow his escape down through the house.

Investigating the sash, he found it unlatched. He raised it softly. He waited. No sound. Then he pushed the blind aside gently, stepping into the room.

For a moment he stood, revolver in hand, waiting for his eyes to accustom themselves to the light. Then he glanced about. It was a girl's chamber, filled with characteristic feminine intimacies. The girl herself, back to him, was seated at a table, head bowed on her arms. Unaware of his presence, she sensed something and turned.

Then she gasped, suppressing a cry. His heart stood still. It was Alice and this was the house of the tragedy.

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM DYING LIPS.

"ALICE CARDLE!" he ejaculated. "You must listen to me."

"Why should I believe anything you tell me?" she answered coldly.

Yet the mere fact that she replied, in a low tone matching his own, was an initial victory for him. She might have called for help, screamed again for the police.

"I did not kill your father," he asserted, suddenly anxious to wipe out that impression, to justify himself in her eyes. "I had no evil intentions toward him, no real ill will."

"Why did you come back to New York then?"

"To get to the bottom of the frame-up against me, to learn why I was falsely accused of bribery, to bring to justice those people who made me a scapegoat."

"But you knew it was dangerous, that you would be arrested upon sight?"

He nodded.

"Why did you come, then," she insisted. "Did you have some definite plan? Was there some tangible clue you had heard about?"

He shook his head.

"I came on sudden impulse, to see what I could do."

"You mean you came to this block party tonight by accident?"

"Yes, I had no idea anything of the kind was on."

She paused and a soft note crept into her voice.

"If only I could believe that, Charlie Bradford! But this block party has been advertised for months. For any one determined to do ill to my father it furnished an ideal opportunity, because all clues would be swallowed up in the dense crowd. You had every reason to hate him. You once said you would get even with him. You happen to return just at the height of the party and—and when I went up to you to ask you to dance you were standing just across from the house and scowling. I saw you scowl. That's why I had the impish impulse to ask you to dance. I—I didn't recognize you, then."

"I didn't do it," he reasserted. "I bore him no real hatred."

"I don't believe you—I can't believe you."

His heart dropped.

"What are you going to do?"

She half smiled, glancing down—it was a moment of additional softening.

"You have forgotten that you are armed. You are master of the situation."

"Alice!" He threw the weapon down upon the bed, out of reach. "I put myself at your mercy," he said. "Now will you believe me?"

She rose. Standing then close to him, she resisted an impulse to finger the lapel of his coat.

"Listen to me, Charlie Bradford! In my mind I feel you are guilty, yet something within me contradicts that. And I'm going to tell you something, so you will understand why I do what I am going to do.

"When I was a little girl," she went on, "I used to watch you, and I made you my hero—I thought you were just the most wonderful man there was. Then—then there came all that terrible trouble and I couldn't believe that father could be wholly wrong. Besides"—this was what had counted—"besides, you ran away, like any common criminal!"

He flushed. That was something that had never occurred to him.

"Now everything points to you as the guilty man. And yet—and yet I must let you go. Never again can I respect myself after calling for help when you rescued me from Jim Richards. I was ungrateful, and even if I was sure you were guilty now I would have to let you go."

"I am not guilty," he repeated.

"If only I could know."

He watched her sway. Then suddenly he pulled her to his arms, and there she nestled for fully a minute without protest.

The next instant she pushed away.

"Go!" she cried. All at once her voice mounted shrilly, and he—not understanding women—could hardly realize that it was hysteria, reaction merely; that under all she believed him and loved him with that sudden intensity of a girl's distant admiration transmuted into a woman's passion. "Go! Go!" she exclaimed. "I—I'll scream for the police again."

"But where——"

"The back stairs!" She ran to the door, pointing. "Down there and out to the garage, and there's a passage to the other street."

With feelings so mixed that he hardly knew what he was doing, Charlie hurried down the narrow, carpeted steps, clearly conscious only of the fact that he had held her in his arms, not in the clasp of a dance, but with a lover's embrace, an embrace to which she had submitted.

Then the menace to his own safety was driven home to him sharply by the sound of voices as he reached the hallway in the second floor. With instinctive quickness he darted into the doorway of a darkened room.

Two men were approaching, talking in whispers. One seemed very much at home, neither seemed to anticipate interruption or danger to their plans. Then Charlie had a glance at their faces.

"She's upstairs!" There was no mistaking these features. This was the man whose face Charlie Bradford had seen melt away into the crowd just four times in the evening. Now the one blue eye glinted most evilly. "She's the only witness against Richards and Tippen and——" An expressively menacing gesture.

"Are you goin' th' limit, 'Chink'?" asked the other, a known gangster whose name Charlie was unable to recall.

They passed up the stairs he had just descended before Charlie had put two and two together. "Chink!" That was the name mentioned by Richards as the man delegated to kill the alderman. And Chink was the man who had taken such an interest in his own movements, who claimed to be an eye-witness of the killing. The answer was easy!

And the "she" was upstairs, who was the only witness against Richards and red-stubble—presumably in the attempt to abduct her—was Alice, of course, in danger again?

Charlie did not hesitate a moment. Although unarmed again, he sped up the narrow staircase three steps at a time. He arrived on the top floor just in time to catch a muffled scream. Almost foolhardily he burst through the door, only to hear a cool command:

"Hands up! And not a sound out of you!"

It was the man whose face had haunted him in the crowd. Now the brown eye seemed to search out his own expression, seemed to glow with malignant fire.

"Charlie Bradford," mused Chink slowly. "Too bad! You know too much, I guess, and I'm afraid

we'll have to plug you instead of allowing you to be arrested for the murder of Alderman Cardle."

Charlie, now that he was in a tight place, was cool. He was sizing up the situation swiftly beneath the mask of an ironic smile.

"I believe I stand facing the murderer," he suggested calmly.

"We won't fight for the honor," rejoined the other. Then he added to his companion: "Hand me your gat, Pete, with the silencer!"

It had struck Charlie that the gangsters would not dare fire a shot in the room, but now he understood. Not only was his own life threatened, but Alice, if she witnessed the one killing, would probably be shot immediately afterwards. And slowly there came back to him recollection of the reputed best marksman of the underworld, the man supposed to be the coolest killer in the long history of New York gangster killings, one "Chink" Rannberg.

The gangster, however, made one little mistake. Charlie Bradford in one second justified his reputation. For just an instant the hand of Rannberg was taken from the weapon. In that briefest moment his finger had not yet clasped the trigger of the second revolver equipped with the long terror-inspiring silencer.

Charlie leaped. With a hand for the other's throat, a knee directed at the other's abdomen, he literally flung himself through five feet of space without so much as a preliminary flexing of his muscles. His full hundred and seventy pounds bore the gangster back and down. They went to the floor with a crash. Then began the primitive struggle of bare hand against bare hand, the instinct to tear and maim rising above the veneer of civilization, all Queensbury rules discarded from grim necessity.

However, the fight dragged on. The ex-detective grew more and more desperate, utterly unable to guess what might be happening about him, momentarily expecting a blow upon the head or a shot in the back.

After only a brief moment there was a shot. He had not been struck, nor was there any diminution of the fury of "Chink" Rannberg's struggles. Then came another shot and the figure in his arms went limp.

Amazed, he extricated himself, straightened, rose. There stood Alice, in her hand the smoking revolver he had thrown upon her bed some short ten minutes before.

"I shot them both," she exclaimed exultantly, hysterically, feverishly excited. "I never held a revolver in my hand before!"

The next instant there was another commotion. A number of policemen, headed by a sergeant, burst into the room. The latter saw Charlie and raised a weapon, a smile spreading slowly across his face.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Bradford, the man we want!"

"He's not the one you want," Alice cried. When it was apparent to her that Charlie actually was under arrest and face to face with the responsibility for her father's death, she found that she believed him and was sure of his innocence. "He didn't kill my father!"

The police sergeant was soothing.

"That will be all right, Miss Cardle! We'll just take him along to the station. We——"

"But those two!" she pointed. "And the men you arrested in the house across the street!"

"I guess it's all a gang," hazarded the policeman, inwardly realizing he knew nothing about it. "Bradford here is probably the brains and—and it'll be a great round-up altogether."

"But—but you must listen to me!" she pleaded.

One of the policemen took the revolver from her. Two of the others had examined the bodies of the gangsters.

"Both dead," reported one man. "One's Rannberg, I think. The other's Pete Killifer; served time for the Mallory job, you know. She"—a glance of real admiration at Alice—"she done it!"

"What! The girl?" The sergeant sniffed.

At that moment another policeman rushed in. "The alderman's returned to consciousness," he reported. "They think he won't last long, and the nurse says he wants to tell who shot him, to make a confession."

"Damn it," muttered the sergeant. "Why didn't the lieutenant stick around." Then he faced Charlie, and his expression brightened. "Come along," he directed. "We'll get you identified and that'll cinch the chair for you."

Alice at the first word had fled ahead of them, to be at the alderman's side.

Cardle was propped up in his bed, weak, but eyes clear and expression alert as Charlie was brought in. At once came recognition.

"Charlie Bradford!" He spoke in a feeble voice, showing that life was ebbing away. He turned to Alice. "I did him a great wrong. I—I framed him and I want you to—to see he is reinstated. Tell—tell every one that I confess." A series of gasps interrupted, but Cardle summoned his will to finish. "Bradford was right. There was a—a criminal gang and I was the head. He was dangerous to me. Now—now"—a flash of spirit—"I have been double-crossed, but"—a smile—"I saw who shot me. I—I saw the flash of the revolver and saw his face. It was"—for a long while it seemed as if the dying man would be unable to gasp sufficient breath to finish—"it was 'Chink' Rannberg!"

Later Alice slipped her hands upon Charlie's shoulder. "Can you ever forgive me for not believing you?"

His answer was not in words.

"Can you forgive my—my having a criminal for a father?" she asked.

He nodded.

She laughed aloud, in sheer joy. "He wasn't my real father. He married mother when I was a year old, so——"

But Charlie's impulses were not in the line of conversation.

The Secret Of A Shadow

BY ANNIE M. SHELDON

KELLY was aroused from his sleep one night in the Cheltham Hotel by sounds of a commotion below stairs, and looking at his watch he saw that it was one o'clock in the morning.

Some late returning party, full enough to be noisy, he thought, and he turned over and composed himself to sleep again.

Scarcely had he done so when he was startled by a wild shriek and the appalling cry of "Murder—murder—murder!"

Kelly leaped from his couch and attired himself. Descending the stairs he rushed into the office.

There was no one there save a boy, who was wringing his hands and trembling with fright.

"What's the matter? What is the disturbance? Who shrieked murder?" asked the detective.

"Please, sir, I—I—I——" the boy stammered, while his teeth chattered so that he could not speak.

"Tell me what's up," cried Kelly again, impatiently, and catching him by the shoulder he gave him a shake.

"Yes, sir, it's in there; in the back—back—back——"

"Where?" thundered the officer.

"There!" replied the boy, pointing toward the parlor at the back of the bar.

Releasing the frightened boy, the detective hurried into the little room behind the bar, dignified by the name of parlor.

An excited group of guests of the hotel and the servants were there; and as he passed the threshold a young man, with a very pale face and great staring black eyes, which were stony and expressionless, who knelt beside the body of a man, which lay extended flat upon his back on the floor, again uttered the terrible cry:

"Murder! Murder! Murder!"

A glance convinced the detective that the youth was an idiot.

"Hush, hush!" said the hotel owner, Jenks by name. "Hush, that's a good boy."

As he spoke he patted the young fellow on the head, as though he were a child.

Kelly saw that the man on the floor was dead, and a hasty examination disclosed a knife-wound in his breast.

"He has been stabbed to death?" questioned the officer.

"Yes," replied Jenks.

"Tell me all about it."

"I'll tell you all I know, willingly; that's little enough, though."

"Tommy knows, Tommy knows, Tommy knows this is murder. He's dead. Pop's dead! Murder, murder, murder!" cried the idiot.

"He's the dead man's son—leastways that's the way he's entered on the hotel book. You see, the murdered man and the foolish boy arrived here yesterday and registered—that is to say, the man registered for both—James Kingsley and son, Brooklyn, N. Y.—that's what he wrote.

"To-night Mr. Kingsley remained in this here room writing and drinking. I was in the bar-room taking a nap, when I heard the sound of a heavy fall, and one awful shriek of mortal agony. In a moment I was wide awake, and rushed into the back parlor.

"As I reached the door and threw it open, I saw Mr. Kingsley lying upon his back, as he is now, while a powerful-looking man, dark-complexioned, and with a black mustache, stood over him in a threatening attitude. The man's hands were clenched, and there was a look of hate upon his face. The moment he became aware of my presence, and before I could seize him, the stranger turned and leaped though the window at the side of the room. As he disappeared I heard him mutter:

"'You have cheated the law, Jim Kingsley, but met a merited fate.' I am sure that man is the murderer. A moment after he disappeared, Tommy, the fool, here, came rushing into the room and set up the terrible cry which alarmed the house.

"That's all I know about the murder."

Thus concluded Mr. Jenks.

An examination of the body revealed in his pocket a card bearing the name of Joel Kingsley, No. —— Halsey Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The landlord lost no time in telegraphing to this address the news of the murder, while the frantic idiot was locked up in his sleeping-room, and Kelly investigated still further.

There were tracks under the window which plainly told that the assassin had here both entered and departed from the scene of his crime.

The detective followed the tracks in the soft soil until they ended at the pavement of the street.

At that point all signs of a trail were lost.

The coroner came in the morning, and his investigation was duly conducted, developing the facts that the deceased had been killed with a long and very slender-bladed knife, and that robbery had not been the motive for the crime, as a well-filled purse was found in his pocket.

That day Joel Kingsley arrived.

He was a hard-featured fellow of sixty years, at least, and claimed to be James Kingsley's brother.

The detective noticed that when Tommy, the idiot, was brought into his presence, the half-witted one seemed in mortal terror.

"Tommy wants to stay here; Tommy don't want

to go with him; he'll beat Tommy more than pop did. Oh, let Tommy stay here," the idiot whined, and then he began to blubber.

"Shut up," growled Joel Kingsley roughly.

Jenks introduced Kelly to the murdered man's brother, and he informed him that he was a detective.

"You're the man I want," he said.

"You wish to engage me in this case?"

"That's it," assented Kingsley.

"Very well, sir; my business is the detection of crime, and I am willing to undertake to find your brother's murderer. Mr. Jenks saw him, you know, and he has given me a description. I think I shall find the man, although the case is shrouded in mystery. Can you, from your knowledge of your brother, suggest any motive for the crime? Can you imagine why your brother was slain? As there was no robbery, we have excluded that motive, and the only other one that I can think of is vengeance. Do you know if your brother had an enemy—one who hated him bitterly?"

"I don't know as he had," answered Joel, briefly.

"Were you and your brother on good terms?"

The man gave a quick, covert glance.

He hesitated a moment. The officer watched him narrowly without seeming so to do. Finally he answered:

"We were not on the best of terms. James has been for years a stranger to me."

"And this idiot boy of his—what of him?" asked Kelly.

"He is James's son. At least, so James said. The boy was left in my care for a while, and I had to punish him for stealing. He would steal everything he could get his hands on. Since that time he has hated me. He is a fool, but he has a sort of low cunning of his own."

"Was he attached to his father?"

"Oh, no."

"How was that?"

"James was ashamed of the boy, and he was cruel to him sometimes. I don't think Tommy loved his father."

Some further conversation ensued, and at the end of it Kelly found himself in possession of a retaining fee, and had been regularly engaged to hunt down the mysterious assassin of James Kingsley.

His only chance of success was to locate the man whom the landlord had seen in the parlor standing over the murdered man.

How should he do this?

That was one of those puzzling questions which so frequently confront men in his profession, and it is the combatting of such difficulties which renders the expert fertile in resources and expedients.

Kelly tried a cunningly-worded "personal," which purported to be from a lady; but although it appeared several days in the newspapers, his man paid no attention to it.

It was evident that he was too foxy to be caught with chaff, and that it must be a more cunningly-contrived pitfall which would serve to entrap him.

Fate or chance—call it what you will—often does more for us than our own astuteness. It is the ability to grasp at a chance before it is gone, and to discriminate as to what is a real chance, that makes a successful detective.

One day at noon Kelly sat beneath a large tree in a park—one of those small oases in the desert of a great city—watching the moving throng on the street beyond, when two men, who were approaching from opposite directions, met at a little distance, and the trunk of the tree concealed Kelly from them.

He obtained a good view of the faces of these men, while he remained himself unseen.

Kelly could scarcely repress a cry of exultation, for one of the men was the living duplicate of the description which Jenks had given of the supposed murderer of James Kingsley in the Cheltham Hotel.

The detective could, perhaps, have arrested him, had he been so disposed, but there would have been a certain risk to run.

The supposed murderer and the man who had met him were both powerful fellows.

Had he rushed upon them, their united efforts might have defeated the officer.

He determined to track his man, and capture him in a quiet way, when he could be taken by surprise.

The two men were evidently acquainted for a strange conversation followed between them.

"Did you locate your man?" asked the suspect.

"Yes."

With the exchange of these remarks, the two men separated.

The detective shadowed the suspected assassin all that day.

Toward nightfall he entered a saloon in Grand street, and Kelly followed him.

His conduct in this place, which was an underground den of vice, where crooked classes of both sexes congregated, was peculiar, and he was now in disguise.

The suspected man seemed to be watching for some one; and when, near the hour of midnight, three men left the den, he followed them.

Reaching the street after him, Kelly observed that his man was following the three men who had left the dive. His method was that of an experienced shadow.

"That guy is as skillful a trailer as any detective I ever saw," said Kelly.

His conduct was very mysterious. What was his object in shadowing the men?

The officer could not comprehend why a criminal should be thus trailing other criminals.

At the corner, near the den from which he had just emerged, the man Kelly was following met a person who had evidently been waiting for him, concealed in the dark shadows of a wall, while the three men passed him. A few words were

exchanged between them, but Kelly drew near enough to hear them.

"Everything is fixed," said one of them.

"Are the boys on hand?" asked the other.

"Yes," said Kelly's suspect. "You can nab them."

"That is fine."

"Good-night; I am going home. You cannot fail. We shall have accomplished a good deal by morning, Frank," said the man whom Kelly suspected of murder.

Then they parted.

Kelly still followed his quarry who led the detective a long distance.

Finally he entered a residence in the Bronx and Kelly remained on the watch until dawn of day.

He could have arrested the man that night, but suspected that he was at the bottom of some new crime, and Kelly meant to bring that home to him. He wanted to give him rope enough to hang himself.

The following morning dawned.

While yet a fog hung over the city the door of the house which the officer had watched with continual vigilance all night long opened, and the man he had tracked came out muffled in a coat.

"Where can he be going so early?" the detective muttered.

He led Kelly a long way. The fellow seemed to fear no one, as he never looked back.

"He must be daring," Kelly thought, as he noted that his manner had nothing in it of the stealthy vigilance, which is characteristic of most criminals.

A moment afterward the man he was following came face to face with a well-known police-detective, who was the terror of all criminals.

The detective and the supposed assassin exchanged greetings, and each passed serenely on his way.

"Was there ever such impudence? The rascal possesses the most consummate assurance. After this he will surprise me in nothing. His cheek is something amazing," thought Kelly.

The first news-stand he found open at that hour received his patronage.

The detective bought the same morning paper that he saw the suspect purchase, turned to the page that he saw him reading, and the following heading caught Kelly's eye in large, bold type:

"A CUNNING CAPTURE.
Three of the Most Notorious Bank-Robbers in America Secured.

The capture the result of a "plant" arranged by Police Sergeant Dorran, better known as "The Shadow."

Full particulars in second edition. News received too late for the present paper. Watch the noon issue, etc.

The suspect folded up his paper, thrust it into his pocket, and hurried along at increased speed.

This man had mystified Kelly more than any criminal he had ever hunted, but he knew the denouement must soon come now.

The remarkable assassin, as Kelly mentally designated the man whom he was following, kept on at a swinging gait for half an hour.

He reached a taxicab-stand just as Kelly was asking himself if this trail would never end, and, calling a cab, entered it, and was driven rapidly away.

Kelly leaped into another vehicle.

"A ten spot if you keep in sight of that taxi in advance of us," he said to the chauffeur, who at once put on more gas, and bowled along at a rapid pace behind the vehicle which his man had secured.

The way was becoming familiar to Kelly, and, to his complete amazement, a few moments later the taxi come to a halt before the Kelly Office and the man he had tracked so faithfully leaped out and entered the building with a confident and unhesitating step.

"Ah," thought the detective, "his conscience has been at work. He has become the victim of remorse, and he has voluntarily given himself up, and will no doubt confess all. I must hasten into the office and hear his story. It will be an interesting one."

With this intent he leaped from the taxi and hastened into the office.

The man he had followed stood at the desk conversing with the head of the department in a familiar way.

"Who is that man?" Kelly asked a detective whom he chanced to know.

"The man talking with the chief?" the other inquired.

"The same," replied Kelly.

"He is Dorran, known as 'The Shadow,' and the most expert bull in the profession. He is the man who put up a job which resulted in the capture of the three fly cracksmen last night," replied the officer.

Kelly was dumbfounded. He had never met the celebrated Detective Dorran, and he was a new man in New York, and could not comprehend how it was that he should answer so perfectly to Landlord Jenks' description of the party who was supposed to have assassinated the man Kingsley.

After a moment's reflection, Kelly determined to tell Dorran all, and ask him to assist him.

When the celebrated detective, who had no living rival as a shadow, left the room, Kelly followed him.

He proceeded to an interior office, or retiring-room, which was for the convenience of the force, and seated himself at a desk.

There was no one in the room save he and Kelly, who introduced himself, and told him the story of the murder of James Kingsley at Cheltham Hotel. He told "the shadow" how perfectly he resembled the man whom the landlord had so minutely described, and how he had followed him, believing him to be the murderer.

When he had concluded his narration, to which

"the shadow" had listened without a change of expression, Dorran said quietly:

"I am the man the landlord saw in the room with the murdered man. I am the very man he described to you."

Was the detective insane? Kelly could scarcely believe his senses.

It could not be that Dorran, "the shadow," was an assassin. Yet he had almost so confessed. Amazement rendered Kelly silent.

Dorran seemed to enjoy his astonishment.

Finally he said:

"I owe you an explanation, Mr. Kelly, and in making it I will reveal to you a secret of my life.

"When I was but a young boy, my father was murdered by an old enemy in my presence, and I alone saw the deed committed.

"The face of my father's assassin was indelibly stamped upon my mind; and when all the officers of the law had failed, I resolved, when I became a man, that I would seek my father's assassin, and find him, too, if he yet lived.

"It was thus that I became a detective; but years went by, and I never met the man who killed my father until a month ago.

"Then I came face to face with him on the streets of New York, but he escaped me then, although I struck his trail; and I will tell you now that my father's murderer was James Kingsley.

"Finally I located and traced him to the Hotel Cheltham. I was standing over him looking down into his face as he lay dead upon the floor, with his hands clenched with rage, when the landlord came in, and as he said, I leaped through the window and escaped.

"I was not guilty of James Kingsley's death, though. Oh, no, no! I meant to capture him. I meant to lead him to the electric chair. I meant my vengeance to be consummated by his death as a felon, as the worst of criminals."

Dorran paused.

"Then, in heaven's name, who murdered Kingsley? This affair is becoming more mysterious than ever," cried Kelly in puzzled tones.

"I will explain the mystery. I will tell you who killed James Kingsley. I was peering in at him as he sat, alive and well, at the table, when Tommy, the idiot, crept into the room; and before I comprehended his purpose, he drew a long, slender knife from his pocket and buried it in Kingsley's heart. Then restoring the knife, to which a string was attached, to its hiding place, the idiot sneaked out of the room, while I entered it to assure myself that the man who had killed my father was really dead."

I sought Joel Kingsley in Brooklyn.

We searched Tommy, the idiot, and found suspended from his neck a long, slender knife, still stained with blood.

The idiot was disarmed, and the mystery of James Kingsley's murder was solved.

A month later Dorran attempted to murder Joel Kingsley; and after that he was confined, so that he could harm no one.

Dorran and Kelly became firm friends after that, and worked together on more than one exciting case.

PREHISTORIC INDIANS AS SURGEONS

PREHISTORIC Indians of South America had crude medicine men who removed splinters of arrowheads and stone bludgeons from wounded warriors by cutting through the skull with knives of stone or obsidian and other simple instruments wrought from copper and bronze. Sometimes the patient lived; frequently he went to the happy hunting grounds.

These uncomfortable treatments of serious casualties from tribal skirmishes still continue in remote areas of Bolivia. Evidence of this has been gathered by field workers from the American Museum of Natural History.

Of nearly 1,200 skulls collected in South America by the late Dr. Adolph Bandelier for exhibition in the Museum, about five per cent. had been operated upon. To surgeons the practice is known as trephining. It consists of removing a disk or button of bone from the skull with a saw called a trephine.

Complex fracture of the skull with depression of the bony plates must have been common occurrences during the ancient tribal wars when clubs headed with stone and copper along with slings, the "Bolo" and the "lliui" were offensive weapons, said the reports of the Museum's investigators.

A natural procedure, they opined, with victims who survived skull fractures must have been attempts to remove the splinters of bone that pricked the brain, or to cut out fragments pressing upon it.

Warlike clans fight intermittently even to-day in the wilds of Bolivia and skull fractures are common. Other heads are perforated now and then in the bacchanales and festivals whooped up occasionally with great quantities of intoxicants, the investigators reported. When the laughter and the free-for-alls quiet down, the medicine men get out their sharp pocket knives and make incisions into the injured skulls of the sufferers, frequently covering the aperture with gourd. During the operation they scrape around the wound with a chisel.

Modern anesthetics are unknown to the medicine men. They put their patient into insensibility by constant use of the "coca" plant. This also is enjoyed for healing purposes, and is commonly applied to wounds, bruises and contusions.

Crime Waves

By J. C. KOFOED

THE mayor of the Greatest City slammed his fist on the paper-cluttered desk top, and ripped out a trenchant oath. A certain item in the night extra edition of the *Argus-Intelligencer* was the cause. Its bold black headlines stared insolently up at him:

"CRIME WAVE INUNDATES CITY. TEN HOLDUPS AND A MURDER SET RECORD FOR BANDITRY. POLICE APPEAR POWERLESS."

"It's got to stop, by God, it's got to stop!" he ejaculated. "If Heenan can't handle it I'll give the job to someone who can." He pressed a button. A cherubic office boy appeared.

"You ring, sir?"

"You're positively clairvoyant, James," snorted the mayor. "Yes, I rang. Send Commissioner Heenan in here. Take some of the weariness out of your legs. Make it snappy."

The boy said, "Yes, sir," but muttered something about "ole crab" as he sidled gingerly through the door.

Five minutes later Police Commissioner Heenan entered the office. He was a medium-sized man, with no particularly salient physical features save a pair of compelling gray eyes and a jaw that was firmer and squarer than most men's. His bushy hair was seamed with white, and there were deep scarred lines in his tired face.

The mayor tossed his newspaper across the desk. "Well, Heenan, what is the word? You see how they're beginning to drill into us. And I don't blame them in the least. It's an ugly record, Heenan, a mighty bad blot on the administration. What explanation have you to offer?"

"Explanation?" The commissioner leaned forward in his chair. "No, there ain't none, Mister Mayor, only the excuse of too few men; patrolmen coverin' beats that are too big for them, pluggin' away ten, twelve, fourteen hours a day. Thirty years I've been on the force, startin' in pluggin' asphalt. Then all the way up the line to commissioner, an' in that time I've never seen conditions as bad as they are now. Considerin' how the town's grown we've never had fewer men. What do the people expect? My men are workin' harder than those who're criticizin' 'em, but they're only human. They can't be in a dozen places at once. I'll take the blame, Mr. Stone."

The city's executive leaned frowningly back in his swivel chair. "Of course, it is to be expected that you will take the blame. There never has been any question as to your courage, Heenan. I personally recall when that mad tiger escaped from the Zoo how you crawled down into a drain and killed it single-handed. I have never doubted your intelligence, either. The records of the Gault murder case, the First National Bank robbery and the Findeisen forgery affair would dispel any that I might harbor. However, that's not the point. Success is a requisite that must be possessed by every one of my subordinates. You understand, Heenan, that I intend going higher than the mayoralty of a city. There are bigger plumbs in the political pie, and I intend getting them. This crime wave is hurting my chances. You can see that. It must be stopped."

"There is only one way of stopping it."

"By giving you more men?"

"Yes."

"Then, by the living jingo, I'll take over matters myself! You are temporarily relieved from duty, Heenan. I'll show you what scientific application can do."

The commissioner's shoulders sagged and his face went gray. He understood the mayor's position exactly. With the cool selfishness of the professional politician, the executive was covering himself. That in doing so he wrecked an honorable career of thirty years standing was merely an incident, to be deplored, but condoned. There lurked, too, in his trim, calculating head the knowledge that the crime wave was at its height; that, with the economic pressure lightened, it must shortly subside, and to the municipality's chief magistrate would go the credit.

The mayor rang for his stenographer, a trim, business-like young person, who wore a crisp white shirtwaist and an Ascot tie. He had learned to care for her, and, having seen her dining at the Marborough-Astoria with Russel Ford, the brilliant and well-beloved actor, knew that she wore a décolleté dinner gown with the same savoire-faire as she did her business costume.

"A notice to each precinct captain, Miss Lawson," he said briskly. "'Police Commissioner Heenan has been temporarily relieved of duty, and during his absence the affairs of the Bureau will be handled by the Mayor. Each captain will report to this office to-morrow afternoon at three o'clock. No excuse for absence will be accepted.' That is all, thank you."

It was done coolly, with no regard for Heenan's feelings. The knife was turned in the open wound without compunction. Miss Lawson flashed a startled look at the broken officer, but Mayor Stone did not notice it. He was busy riffling over a sheaf of reports concerning European police methods. The human side of the case did not appeal to him at all.

Heenan waited a moment, watching his chi-

with those keen old eyes of his. Then, shuffling slightly, he went away.

The next morning's newspapers blared forth with the sensational news. Commissioner Heenan had been relieved of duty. The mayor—that fighting apostle of the people's rights—was at the helm. If the back of the crime wave could be broken he was the man to do it.

In the afternoon Mayor Stone called his police captains together, and laid down the law to them. He recognized the fact that they lacked men, but capable officers should overcome that difficulty. Hereafter man-shortage would not be accepted as an excuse. They must get results—or give way to someone else.

The captains could no more protest than subordinate army officers could question the findings of their division commander. Tentative plans of reorganization were mapped out. Most of the men were thinking of Commissioner Heenan, who was a capable and considerate chief. If he could not hold his job under this calculating, cool-eyed mayor what chance had they? When the conference was over they went away gloomily, but Stone smiled. He was stirring them up!

Then his mind shifted to pleasanter and more personal channels. He rang for Miss Lawson. Efficiency was his mania. What was the use of dissembling, of beating around the bush when he had made up his mind?

"Ruth," he said—he always called her Ruth when there were no business associates present—"we've known each other for a long time now——"

The youthful stenographer, dimpled chin on hand, drummed softly with her pencil-tip, and watched him sidewise out of two very beautiful eyes. Her cuffs were as immaculate as her cool, white skin; her thick, bright hair matched the sunshine flooding the office.

"A long time's——"

"Just six months," she corrected.

"Well—it seems a lot longer than that. After all, it isn't time alone that turns friendship into something deeper."

"Oh, it almost slipped my mind, Mr. Stone, I have a report here from Detective Mulgrew on the Casanova diamond robbery."

"We'll discuss that later. Just now I want to talk about you—us." He laid his hand over hers.

"This case of Mulgrew's——"

"Oh, the deuce with Mulgrew!" He rose and began pacing the office. "I love you, Ruth. I want you."

Miss Lawson smiled at him. "You're not going to get me. In the beginning I did like you, Mr. Stone. Then I began to see the hardness, the one-sidedness of you. The climax came yesterday when you practically dismissed Commissioner Heenan. You know that he has been working like a galley-slave to check this crime wave; working from sixteen to twenty hours a day. Because he couldn't do the impossible you rewarded his efforts with—disgrace. You did it because you have the foresight to see that better times are close at hand, a condition that is bound to cut down the number of robberies and assaults. Then you will take the credit, because it will help you toward the governor's chair. You wouldn't stop to think where old John Heenan would drag his broken heart. That isn't your business."

"You're all wrong, Ruth, all wrong. You don't understand. Of course, I had to discipline Heenan. This crime wave is an obstacle to my career as well as prejudicial to the welfare of the people."

"That's just it. Your career comes before the welfare of the people—the people for whom old John Heenan is working much harder than you—just as it comes before everything else in your eyes. It would be impossible, anyway. I am engaged."

"Engaged! To whom?"

"That, I think, could scarcely concern you."

"The actor, eh?" His voice was bitter.

With a frown Miss Lawson turned away. "I will leave at the end of the week," she said quietly, and walked into the outer office. A few minutes later the drumming of her typewriter sounded.

The mayor leaned back in his chair, and chewed savagely at a cigar. He should have gone about this Heenan matter more diplomatically. Now that he recalled it the commissioner had recommended Ruth to him. Probably they were related in some way. But then, there was this actor, Ford. Blast it all! everything went wrong at once.

The telephone tinkled. Stone picked up the receiver and barked a short "Well!" into the transmitter.

"This is Mulgrew, sir," said the voice on the wire. "I sent the dope on the Casanova affair up to your office—description of Jacky Boyle, who pulled the job, everything necessary. The commissioner assigned me to the case before he was relieved. Want me to keep it, sir?"

"Of course," snarled the mayor, slamming the receiver back on the hook. Blast these thick-headed detectives, anyway! What could a man do with such assistants? Instead of asking fool questions he ought to be out on the job. This Casanova case was important, too. If Mulgrew didn't make any headway in a day or two he'd have to look into the matter himself.

When Stone went for lunch he found that Miss Lawson had gone, but Jansen, the guard, said she left at her usual time. The mayor had hoped for an opportunity to place himself in a better light. That would have to wait now.

He returned at two o'clock, and plunged into some detailed work. It absorbed him. He forgot himself in its interest. At four Miss Lawson came in and told him that a gentleman, on most pressing personal business, wanted to speak with the mayor. No, he had no card, and he would not give his name.

"Send him in," he grunted, bending once more

over the papers he was studying. When he heard the key turn in the lock he looked up—startled.

A man, with a bewildering brush of brown hair and a beard that almost obscured the eyes like those of a skye-terrier, stood looking at him. He wore a slouch hat that was pulled well down over his forehead, but—most interesting of all—he held an automatic in his hand, and it was pointed at his honor the mayor.

"Good afternoon," he said in a voice that was slightly thick with a foreign accent.

"W—what do you want?" stammered Stone.

"Get your hand away from that button before I kill you. I heard that you kept a fair sized amount of money here, so I thought I'd come and collect."

The executive of the city's destiny grew calmer. This fellow was certainly a daring thief, but it was impossible that he should walk into City Hall, commit robbery, and walk away unmolested.

That knowledge did not seem to trouble the bandit. Holding his weapon in dangerous proximity to Stone's head he deftly gagged him and wrapped him securely in some light but strong rope that he produced from under his voluminous coat.

That action made the mayor realize that he was being dealt with by a man who had planned every step. What in the deuce was the matter with Jansen?—with the two-score patrolmen stationed in the Hall? Why didn't some of them come? His impotent rage almost strangled him.

The bandit went swiftly through the mayor's effects, while that official fumed and tugged unavailingly at his bonds. Mentally he poured the vials of his wrath on the unsuspecting heads of the City Hall guards. They were standing idly about, exchanging brainless inanities, while he—their chief—was robbed. It was intolerable. He chewed unavailingly at the gag.

Apparently brown-beard found nothing to tempt him. He sneered openly at the mayor's watch and small roll of bills.

"I'm not a piker," he grunted. "Petty larceny never interested me. I'd rather go without a cent than only take a few dollars. Well, good-by. My trip was a water-haul, but it's worth while telling the boys about."

He lifted his hat, bowed politely. Stone heard the click of the lock as he turned the key.

For fifteen minutes the mayor writhed in impotent fury. His legs were tied to his chair, else he would have aroused attention by kicking on the floor. All things come to an end eventually. There was a tap on the door; it was shaken violently. Finally a key was inserted in the lock, and Commissioner Heenan came in, with Ruth Lawson behind him.

It was merely a matter of moments to loose the raging executive, who burst into a spluttering torrent of invective.

Miss Lawson explained that she had shown the man in as directed. When he came out she was at the door, receiving a telegram from a messenger boy, and had not seen the bandit lock the door.

Stone turned on her, all his protested love forgotten in a bitter whirl of anger. "Why the devil don't you keep your eyes open? This wouldn't have happened if you had been on the alert——"

"Wait a minute," interrupted Heenan, and the words came straight and hard. "Miss Lawson is my niece. If you open your mouth like that to her again I'll——" His big fists knotted.

When Ruth had gone the commissioner sat down, cuddling a fat cigar in one corner of his mouth. He looked at the litter of papers and the severed ropes, and then said in a normal tone, as though nothing unpleasant had gone before: "What are you going to do about this?"

"Confound the police!" raged the mayor. "I'll suspend every one in City Hall."

"If the story gets in the papers they'll laugh you out of office. *'Mayor Succeeds Police Commissioner and is Robbed in Own Office!'* How would you like that? I tell you the organization wouldn't let you run for dog-catcher with that label pasted on your back."

Stone looked serious. He had been so savagely angry that he had not given a thought to the light in which he must appear. He had told the representatives of the press that the police head must be directly responsible for everything—for the failure of his subordinates as well as his own lapse. In taking Heenan's place he had assumed the responsibility of guarding his own person. Certainly, he had failed, and in that failure had given his enemies the keenest weapon on which they could lay their hands.

"I suppose I'll have to let it drop," he grunted.

Heenan smiled. It was only a faint flicker of mirth, but the mayor caught it. The savage in him blazed high. He must vent his wrath on someone. Who better than this man, who had openly flouted him?

"What about me?" asked the commissioner. "I was only temporarily relieved of duty, you know."

"It will be permanent from now on. I intend appointing Assistant Commissioner Chambers to your place."

Heenan picked up his hat and brushed an imaginary speck of dust from the crown. "All right, Mister Mayor. There's a lot of other ways of making a living. For instance, if I was short of money I could go down to the office of the *Augus-Intelligencer* right now, and get a tidy little sum for this story."

The Chief Magistrate of the Greatest City sprang from his chair. "You—you blackmailer!"

"No," Heenan denied, "it ain't blackmail, but it would be darned foolishness if I didn't protect myself. You've had it in for me a long time, and nominated me for the Gorgonzola Cheese Medal. You'll wear it yourself if this story gets out."

Stone subsided. He choked down the bitterness of defeat, and the old suave look came back to his face.

"Perhaps my language has been a trifle strong,

No, it isn't blackmail. If I decide—as I probably will—that you are preferable to the assistant commissioner as head of the bureau, have I your word that you will say nothing of this affair?"

"Absolutely."

"Then, Mr. Commissioner," said the mayor of the Great City, "permit me to be the first one to congratulate you on your return to duty."

That evening John Heenan smiled gravely over the blazing headlines of the *Argus-Intelligencer.* They shouted:

"COMMISSIONER HEENAN RESTORED MAYOR TAKES ABOUT-FACE AND RETURNS OFFICIAL TO DUTY."

While he was reading the article that followed, Ruth Lawson, accompanied by a broad-shouldered young man, entered the office.

"Well, honey," chuckled the commissioner, "what are you doing in this section of our crime-infested city?"

"Russ and I dropped in to congratulate you."

"The *Argus* seems to think that I should have congratulations," Heenan ruminated, stroking his grizzled jowl. "Say, listen, you people can give me some information about that hold-up. Spill it."

Ruth laughed deliciously.

"Well, you see, I believed the only way for you to get your job back, Uncle John, was to put Mr. Stone in a position where he couldn't say 'no.' Nobody had ever held the mayor up in his own office, so—— Well, Russ isn't an actor for nothing. He came into the outer office after I had sent Jansen and the office boy on errands, put on that terrible wig and beard, and walked in. When the job was done he merely put his disguise in his grip and walked away. Even if the mayor tries to ferret out who held him up he won't find a policeman in City Hall who saw a man with Bolshevik whiskers. Isn't that a frightful confession to make to the commissioner of police?"

John Heenan kissed his niece.

"Well, there's one consolation, anyway," he said, "so long as I keep my mouth shut that episode won't be listed by the *Argus-Intelligencer* as one of the unsolved problems of the present crime wave."

DOG TRAVELS FAR

WHEN Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Cecil, who formerly lived in St. Louis, Mo., moved from Eldorado, Kan., to Wichita Falls, Tex., on Aug. 30, 1919, they left Shepp a collie dog the pet of their three children, in the care of a neighbor, Mrs. Julius Busch.

On Oct. 2, 1919, Mrs. Busch wrote Mrs. Cecil that the dog, after showing signs of restlessness, had disappeared. On Aug. 15, 1920, Mrs. Cecil opened the door and found the dog. It had traveled more than 630 miles to find its playmates, the children.

"He rushed into the house," Mrs. Cecil recently wrote, "and immediately recognized the children. He seemed to make more of them than ever before. For several weeks he would not let them get out of his sight.

"The dog was given to my eldest son, James, about seven years ago by his grandmother, Mrs. James Coffey, of St. Louis."

FRENCH GUN WITH 200-MILE RANGE

INTERESTING tests of what is claimed to be a gun which may have a range of 200 miles, the invention of Lieutenant Colonel Maze of the French army, were recently made on a model in miniature at the Belgian artillery range at Vivegnis, near Liege, before a number of French and Belgian staff officers and artillery experts, says a dispatch from Paris to the Chicago *Tribune.* The inventor claims a 300-kilometer range as against the 125-kilometer range registered by the German "Big Bertha" in the bombardment of Paris from the St. Gobain forest in November, 1918. The first tests, which continued for six days, were held near the end of December. The small model used as a testing gun was built along special lines, with the caliber of the French 8-inch piece. Colonel Maze has named the gun "Turbo," because, turbin-like, the velocity of the projectile increases as the range grows greater. The remarkable range of the gun is claimed to be due to three factors: the nature of the explosive used, the gun itself and the character of the projectile. One of the striking characteristics of the piece is its equal thickness from breech to muzzle. Improvements and refinements of the shell, it is claimed, reduce resistance, giving increased range with the same initial velocity. This is made partly possible through a sharp-pointed nose and a flattened end, thus resembling the shell used by the "Big Bertha." The special barrel used is capable of withstanding a pressure of 3,000 kilograms per square centimeter. The dispatch states that discovery of a certain explosive, which continued to exert its maximum pressure until the shell left the gun, influenced the construction of the "Big Bertha," which type of gun, it is added, has now been further developed in the "Turbo," after experiments with and close study of the German gun. French and Belgian authorities are represented as endeavoring to keep particulars of the new piece of ordnance secret, despite Article VIII of the Covenant of the League of Nations, wherein the signatories are pledged to inform each other concerning their armaments.

The Girl's Double

By SERGEANT FRANK MULLER

ANNETTE CROIX was a French Canadian by birth, and by profession a female detective.

For a number of years she was connected with a well-known detective agency in Chicago, but Annette has since happily married, and is a model wife and mother.

When Tim Daly knew her first they worked together on the mysterious St. Paul bank robbery, which occurred some eight years ago.

As the world knows, they captured the robbers, Banks and Braksley, at the end of four months, in Denver, Colorado, and they are now guests at the "Hotel de Joliet," serving a long sentence.

It was while they were associates in this case, and had become well acquainted, that Annette Croix told Daly the story of her life, which forms the substance of this sketch:

At seventeen years of age she was living with an old couple in a small hamlet in the Province of Quebec, Canada.

Of her parentage she was in ignorance; she only knew from Gregg Carnes and his wife that a strolling gypsy band had left her a helpless infant at their door.

She knew she was not a Romany child, for she did not have the appearance of that nomadic race.

The Carnes were a strange couple, morose and retiring, and she lived a lonely life with them.

They were not positively unkind, neither were they wont to exhibit much affection for Annette.

Gregg Carnes had a hunted look in his face, and the girl often wondered if some secret had not cast a depressing shadow over his life.

One night Annette was returning home through a grove, when a handsome but rather sinister-looking man met her.

He was a stranger around there.

This she knew at a glance, for strangers rarely came to that secluded place.

They came face to face on the narrow path.

At the sight of her the stranger came to a sudden halt and started violently. It seemed to Annette he had made a recognition.

She was about to pass him, and a strange fear, an undefined yet powerful premonition of evil came upon her.

The stranger stopped her.

"One moment, miss. Excuse my seeming rudeness, but will you tell me your name?" he asked.

"Annette Carnes," replied the girl.

"Ah, I thought so. I am on my way to the house of Gregg Carnes. Will you show me the route?"

"Certainly, as I am on my way home."

They walked onward, and the stranger asked Annette many questions, which she answered as best she could.

Finally they reached the place Annette called home.

Gregg Carnes and his wife sat on the porch.

"A gentleman who wishes to see you, Father Carnes," said she, and passed into the house.

The stranger followed her with his eyes, and Annette heard him mutter:

"It is the girl!"

Her heart thrilled, and it occurred to her that perhaps the mystery of her life was known to the stranger.

She meant to learn more and crept back to the door.

The stranger and her foster-father and mother were in earnest consultation, but could not hear what they said; she heard Carnes call the stranger Ralph Moore.

Presently the man went away.

"He'll have the game in his own hands now," muttered Carnes.

The Carnes residence was elegantly furnished, and it was always a wonder to Annette where all the money he spent came from, as he received large sums from an unknown person—that is, from a person unknown to Annette.

The money always came by express. That night Ralph Moore returned.

Father Carnes informed Annette that the gentleman, who was an old friend, would be his guest for the night. That evening as the girl was reclining on a couch by the window that opened on the veranda, Ralph Moore, who had been smoking with her foster-father without, came to the window, cigar in hand, and, leaning over Annette, said:

"Girl, your fate is in my hands. Trust me and your lifelong happiness is assured."

At the same moment she saw the dark face of a woman peering in at the door.

An instant later she vanished.

Annette sprang up in affright, and ran to the door, but saw no one. The woman was an entire stranger to her.

Ralph Moore's words had awakened a deep interest in my mind.

"What do you mean, sir?" she asked him.

"I know your parents. I have been commissioned to find you, and if you will come with me I'll take you back to your mother, from whom you were stolen in infancy. She is in Quebec," he whispered.

Before she could answer Carnes came in.

"He speaks the truth; and much as it will pain us to lose you, you must go with Mr. Moore

Your parents have the right to claim you," her foster-father said.

But Annette remembered his muttered words: "Now he will have the game in his own hands," and she distrusted both him and Moore.

Ralph Moore's face was not an honest one. Annette longed to see her mother.

"Was he deceiving me?"

This question she asked herself, but could not understand why—what motive he could have for doing so. Still, the distruct with which the stranger had inspired her remained.

She could not rid herself of it, as she had little faith in him.

The premonition of evil that had come upon Annette at the first sight of him was growing stronger.

What could she do?

Should she refuse to return to her parents, her conduct would seem heartless and unnatural she debated mentally.

"Arrangements have been made, and to-morrow we will start for Quebec. Oh, how happy you should be; a pleasant home awaits you, and your poor mother will welcome you as one returned from the grave. Do not deprive her of the joy of seeing you—a joy for which she has hoped and prayed for long years," said Moore.

Annette was moved.

The mother she had seen in her dreams, but whose love she had never known, should not be disappointed. Then and there her resolution was taken.

Come what might, she would go.

"I will trust you. I will go with you to my mother," said the girl.

An exultant look came to the faces of Moore and her foster-father, but she did not at the time comprehend the meaning of that look.

An hour later she was alone.

The door opened, and a farm-hand, called old Rube, who had lived with Carnes ever since Annette could remember, and who was devotedly attached to her, came in.

"I hear you are going away with the stranger, and that he has promised to take you to your mother. But the man has a bad face. If he should prove to be a crook, here is something that may serve to protect you," he said.

As he spoke he slipped a pistol into her hand.

"Conceal it. Let no one know you have it," added old Rube.

Then he hurried away, and the girl concealed the weapon on her person as Carnes came in.

She started at his sudden appearance, and the pistol fell from her pocket.

Carnes picked it up and examined it.

"Why, the weapon is unloaded; you must let me load it for you," he said. He pulled out a box, and turning from Annette, he took out of the box some cartridges.

"There," he said, returning the weapon; "it is all right now; but why do you carry it?"

"Rube is teaching me how to shoot," she said, carelessly placing the pistol on the table.

He smiled and left the room, whereupon she promptly secured and concealed the pistol again.

Next evening Ralph and Annette took the train for Quebec, and were whirled away.

Just before the lights were ignited Moore left the coach, and returned accompanied by a woman.

Annette started at sight of her, for she was the woman who had peered in at her when at Carnes' house, Ralph Moore told Annette her fate was in his hands.

"I will leave you in charge of the lady for a moment or two. She is my sister," said Moore.

The lady seated herself beside Annette, and conversed with her; then Moore went out.

After an hour Annette's companion dozed. The girl was almost sure now that she was the victim of a plot. She arose and stole from the car, intending to consult the conductor, who looked like an honest man.

Reaching the next car, she came to a sudden pause, for seated there, with his back toward her, was Ralph Moore, and he was talking earnestly with four rough-looking men. The scared girl stole up and listened.

"I have the girl. She was left at my father's house by a band of gypsies years ago. Once we get her to Quebec, I will get her to become my wife and then take her on to New York, and present her to her mother, who is a very wealthy widow. The girl will inherit a fortune, and I as her husband will share it, or they'll pay me well to buy me off. We learned about the girl's parent and fortune from the letters and photograph we found on the detective we captured, Annette heard Moore say.

As he spoke he drew out a photograph of a lady of middle age. The picture bore a most striking resemblance to the girl, who later became a detective.

She could not doubt the lady was her mother.

"By this photograph I recognized the girl. The moment I saw it I said to myself, 'That's the waif father picked up.' You know I have visited father in disguise, and seen the girl many times," Moore went on.

Annette glided back to the car she had left, badly frightened.

She dared not pass Moore to seek the conductor, as she knew he would suspect her purpose.

She thought of leaping from the train, but the danger frightened her.

Presently she regained her seat beside the woman and pretended to sleep, determined to ask the protection of the conductor as soon as he came along.

Finally the train began to slow up and Moore came, and whispered to the woman:

"Give her the chloroform. We must take her from the train, and drive to Quebec," he said in low tones.

The woman drew a sponge and a bottle from her satchel.

Annette sprang up with a scream

"Save me!" she cried, glancing at the passengers. "This man and woman are abducting me!"

"We are taking her to an asylum," said Moore, advancing as Annette drew her revolver.

"Stand back, or I fire!" she cried.

He only laughed, and continued to approach.

She pulled the trigger, but the weapon did not go off, and she knew too late that Carnes had unloaded it instead of loading it.

"Will no one help me?" cried Annette.

"Yes," said a tall, powerful man. He sprang forward with a revolver in his hand and leveled it a Moore.

"Jack Carnes, throw up your hands," he cried.

At the same moment the four men from the other car, whom Annette had seen her enemy conversing with, rushed in and leaped at her defender.

"More of the gang, eh?" he cried, and then he uttered a shrill whistle, and a dozen men from different parts of the car sprang up and fell upon Moore's friends.

A short struggle followed, and Moore and his companions were overcome.

Annette saw their captors handcuff them, and also the woman.

The girl was amazed and almost dead with fright.

"I will explain all to you, miss, in a few moments; but first tell me of yourself. You strikingly resemble a girl whom I have just found, who was stolen from her parents years ago," said Annette's preserver.

She told him all.

"I comprehend the case," said the man. Jack Carnes—that is the real name of the fellow who calls himself Moore—is a professional circulator of counterfeit money, and so are the members of his band whom we have captured. I have been on his track for a long time. A few days ago I was captured by his band and confined in a lonely house just outside of Quebec. I had been previously engaged to look for the stolen daughter of a New York lady of wealth, to whose hiding-place I had found a clue. I had the picture of the stolen girl's mother in my pocket to help identify her, and also letters relating to that case. Jack Carnes availed himself of them. He had seen you, and your striking resemblance to the photograph of the lost girl's mother deceived him. Gregg Carnes is his father, though his hopeful son never visited him save in disguise. The old man manufactures the counterfeit money that Jack and his gang pass.

"Jack remits him his share of the good money thus gained, and that is the secret of his luxurious style of living.

"Jack has been living in New York as a gentleman, while he was really a criminal; but I have solved the mystery of his double life, though it has required many months.

"The men who aided me are my assistants; I am Jerome Waters, the detective."

He further said that Annette could not be the lost girl whom he had already found and fully identified, because she had lost the middle finger of the left hand when an infant.

Of course Annette could not return to the Carnes, and Walters offered her a home.

She accepted, and under his tuition she finally became a famous detective.

TALKED WITH CHRIST

PROF. EMILIO CANTONE, who lives in the town of Rivoli, Italy, has raised a storm of discussion, mostly unfriendly, by asserting that he talked with Jesus Christ during a series of spiritualistic seances. He says he also had long talks with the poet Dante, with St. Ignatius, founder of the Order of Jesuits, and the infamous Torquenada. But he is proudest of having, he insists, spoken with Christ.

"The manifestations took place through the medium Alfonso Scevarelli," says the professor. "Christ began by saying:

"'My brethren, listen. I was the first born of seven children. My father and mother lived in a small house at Nazareth. My father was a carpenter. I was twenty-two years old when he died. I was obliged to go to Jerusalem a short time after his death.

"'Joseph was a widower and was the father of five children when he married Mary. These children were thought by posterity to be my cousins. The three brothers were called Matthias, Cleophas and Eleagarus. The children of his other marriage were Ephraim, Joseph, Elizabeth, Andrew, Anne and James. But none of them followed me as my disciples.'"

After saying that Christ told him Joseph instructed Him in the mysteries of the cabala, which dates from the time of Moses, and after repeating vague sentences, the professor added:

"Christ also told me: 'Brethren, heaven is a vague definition of God's habitation. Hell does not exist. Death is but the end of a certain state of the spirit; successive existences work the purification of human nature and the justice of God gives to all human beings the manifestation of the truth if they walk in the foreknowledge of the future and give up material instincts and purify their desires.'"

Some of the professor's assertions have greatly shocked Christian people for the levity with which sacred things are mentioned, but his revelations have caused much stir, and more are promised. He is sixty years old and has been in turn an officer in the army, a teacher and a post-office official.

A Cross Of Gold

By RUTH PETERSON

I WAS once a New Orleans detective.

A most mysterious murder had been committed in the house where I was stopping.

The owner was a friend of mine by the name of Gerald Levantine.

The victim of the assassin was "Old Seybert Levantine," as he was familiarly called, an eccentric old bachelor, and the elder brother of Gerald.

The day preceding the murder Morton Levantine, the adopted son of Old Seybert, had returned home from New York, where he had been for two or three years attending a medical college.

It was the most puzzling case I ever knew of. There was no conceivable cause, no earthly motive for it, as far as we could discover. Seybert Levantine had retired to his room just as usual, in his brother Gerald's house, where he had made his home for ten years.

In the morning a servant found him dead in his bed, stabbed to the heart. His death must have been instantaneous. Seybert was not worth a dollar that was not so invested that no one would profit by his death save his legal heirs.

He had a few hundred dollars saved up—not enough to tempt any one to kill him, though.

One stormy night, twenty-two years previous, as he was crossing the river in a small boat, Seybert Levantine came upon a drifting skiff, in which was a little child—a boy three years old.

Levantine took the child home, and the little fellow soon won the affections of the entire household.

Gerald Levantine was only too glad to have Seybert adopt the boy, but he was very much surprised when his brother proposed to do so.

Seybert Levantine's adopted son was called Morton.

Old Seybert had never manifested any particular affection for him.

Suspicion pointed to no one as the guilty party, and for nearly two weeks I had been working in vain to find a single clue to the perpetrator of the crime.

As I stood on the veranda watching the sunset this particular evening, Gerald Levantine came out of the house and approached me.

In his hand he had a small carved wooden case.

"I have just made a discovery," he said.

I was interested at once and asked:

"Does it relate to the murder?" I asked.

"Yes; I have just discovered that a large cross of gold, which my brother for some reason treasured with the greatest care, and which he always kept in this case, is gone!"

"Describe that cross to me," I said quickly.

He did so very minutely.

Levantine's information regarding the cross of gold suggested an entirely new idea to me. There might be some mystery about the cross, which, if solved, would lead to the solution of the mystery of the murder of Seybert Levantine.

This was the idea that came to me.

But I could not solve the mystery, if such there were, about the cross without a clue any more easily than I could that of the murder itself.

Some weeks elapsed and I returned to New Orleans.

One day I accompanied a company of sportsmen on a duck-shooting expedition into the depths of the great salt marshes. In the midst of them are some Malay settlements, which have been in existence for years, though seldom visited by white men. After a while I became separated from my companions, and finally the alarming conviction that I was lost forced itself upon my mind.

Night was coming on rapidly, when I heard the sound of footsteps.

A moment later I came to an opening in the bushes, and, to my surprise, saw one of our company—a man who was a comparative stranger to me, and whose name was Pierce Rocher—advancing to the door of a hut in the center of the clearing.

Presently a strange-looking old man, whom a glance assured me was a Malay, came out, and I was about to rush into view when something occurred that checked me.

From his pocket Rocher drew a cross of gold like that Gerald Levantine had described.

At the sight of the cross the old Malay uttered a startled cry and made a spring at the trinket, but Rocher hurled him back.

"What do you mean?" he cried. "Would you rob me?"

"No—no, but the cross—the cross! Where you get him?" the Malay panted

"From my father!" answered Rocher.

Rocher hesitated. He was caught, and knew it.

"You lie!" howled the Malay.

"No—no; I tell you the truth, but I do not know the name of my own father. Listen, old man; I was found drifting in a small boat on the river, when an infant, and the cross was about my neck."

"Why do you tell me this?" the Malay asked.

"Because I have found out the secret of the cross. It opens, and within it is a bit of parchment, upon which a cipher message is written, but I made out the following: '100,000 pounds.' The cipher relates to a fortune, perhaps my own,

and in the cross is also your picture, old man, the terrible scar cross your forehead and all. Since I discovered the secret of the cross I have been on the lookout for the original of that picture—yourself. I saw you enter your hut a few moments ago, and recognized you. Now, I suspect you can read this cipher; that you are in some way concerned in the mystery of the cross, or your picture would not be in it. If you will read for me that cipher I'll reward you as you never dreamed of; I'll make you rich," said Rocher.

"The cipher tells the secret of a fortune, and it belongs to him upon whose neck that cross was placed when he was an infant. I can read the cipher, but I will not, because you are not the owner of that cross."

"You shall read it, by heavens!" cried Rocher.

As he spoke he clutched the aged Malay by the throat and whipped out a dagger.

Silently as a shadow I stole up behind Rocher and dealt him a blow on the head that knocked him senseless. Then I snatched the cross from him. The old Malay sprang to his feet.

"Come with me," I said, "and I will show you the rightful owner of the cross of gold.

The Malay fixed his dark eyes upon my face, and for a moment he regarded me with a searching glance. Then he said:

"I will trust you."

He led me through the swamp until we reached the water-side.

Then we halted, and I hurriedly told the Malay the history of the cross as far as I knew it. Then he gave me the following explanation:

"Twenty-five years ago I was the trusted servant of an English merchant in the Philippine Islands. His name was Stephen Hardress. He was a widower, with a little son. Business called Mr. Hardress to America, and before setting out he deposited with a banker an immense sum of money. I witnessed the delivery of the money, and saw my master write out an order instructing the banker to deliver it to the bearer in case anything happened to him. Then he told the banker that I would be the party to present the order in case of accident to himself. The order was in cipher. The banker took a copy, and the original was inclosed with my picture in the cross of gold and suspended about his little son's neck. I should add that the banker kept a copy of my picture.

"We set out for New Orleans and arrived there in safety. I was left in the city while my master and his little son set out up the river to visit St. Louis. Mr. Hardress never came back, and I could never learn what his fate was, or that of his little son."

This was the Malay's story.

In the cross I found the order and the picture of the Malay.

With him I hastened to New Orleans, intending to take him to see Morton Levantine next day.

That night, in the hotel parlor, I had seated myself in a deep window, where the curtain concealed me, when Rocher and a handsome young lady entered the room.

The first words of their conversation fixed my attention.

"It's all right, Mag," said Rocher. "Undoubtedly Morton Levantine is the heir to the mysterious fortune mentioned in the cipher in the cross of gold. I have lost the cipher and the cross, but I have found the Malay, the original of the picture, and he assured me that the owner of the cross was entitled to a fortune.

"It is lucky you met Morton Levantine in New York, and that he has fallen in love with you. Go right on. Play your part. Become his wife, and then he shall come across. The cross, I have reason to believe, is in the hands of one who will give it to him. When he has secured the fortune, we will see that you will inherit as his wife. Then we will leave the country and enjoy the money."

"Excellent!" replied the lady. "By the way," she went on, "I expect Morton Levantine here to-night. I received a message saying that he was coming to attend the reception given to the governor at this hotel."

"Then lead him on to offer you his hand in marriage. We must not fail now—I have risked too much. From the time when, in a moment of drunken confidence, old Seybert Levantine told me of the golden cross, and how he expected to realize a fortune through it and the boy Morton, I determined to possess that fortune myself. I got Seybert Levantine, and if you fail me, girl, I'll get you!"

The last words were hissed fiercely.

"Never fear—I will not fail," was the young woman's answer.

The secret was out, and I had the mystery solved. Half an hour later, as he was leaving the hotel, I arrested Rocher and lodged him in prison.

I then returned to the hotel in full dress for the reception. I was about to enter a small parlor on the second floor of the hotel, when I saw Morton Levantine and the woman called Mag. The young man's arm was about the woman's waist, and her head rested upon his shoulder, when I entered the room, but I strode up to the pair.

"Morton Levantine, that woman is the accomplice of the assassin of your foster-father," I said.

The girl sprang away and attempted to leave the room, but I placed her under arrest at once. Then, in a few words, I gave the young man an explanation of the case.

It was a surprise to the youth, who was really infatuated with Rocher's beautiful accomplice; but his love was changed to abhorrence.

Rocher was convicted of the murder of Seybert Levantine, in due time, and punished in accordance with the provisions of the law.

The fortune left by Morton's father with the banker in the Philippines was eventually recovered, and he did not forget to reward me well for the part I had played in detecting the assassin of his foster-father, and recovering the cross of gold.

Current News

COUGHS UP 58-YEAR-OLD BULLET.

M. V. Meadows, seventy-eight years old, of Lanett, Ala., veteran of the Civil War, and shot in the eye at the battle of Vicksburg, July 1, 1863, recently coughed out the bullet. He is in his usual good health, despite the fact that he had carried the slug, weighing approximately one ounce, in his head for fifty-five years.

Mr. Meadows was a member of Company G, 37th Alabama Infantry.

WHALE WITH LEGS

The first whale with hind legs has been caught in British Columbia. This was described at a recent lecture held at the American Museum of Natural History. The legs project some four feet from the body near the tail, and are about six inches broad, the bones being covered with a thick layer of blubber which may or may not have contained muscle. The whale, a female fifty feet in length, was unfortunately not preserved at the Victoria whaling station, where it was brought in, and one of the legs was broken off by those making the capture.

"DEAD" FOR 14 HOURS HE COMES TO LIFE.

A case of a man's heart ceasing to beat for fourteen hours and then resuming work is reported from Berne, Switzerland, where the Rev. Baudenbacher, after being officially declared dead, suddenly awoke.

The minister, suffering from heart trouble, fell senseless Friday. His physicians issued a death certificate, arrangements were made for the funeral and newspapers published eulogies of him. He awoke after fourteen hours, surprised to find his bedroom filled with flowers, wreaths, disconsolate relations and friends, and said weakly, "My call has not yet come."

The doctor said the Rev. Baudenbacher might live many years.

TWENTIETH CENTURY MANNA.

Our Consul in Jerusalem states that manna is found now in the regions of upper Mesopotamia and Kurdistan and along the Persian frontier. It falls, he says, in the form of dew during September, October and November, and lodges upon the leaves of oak trees. It immediately hardens and assumes the form of a grain. Early in the morning before the heat of the day it is gathered by spreading sheets beneath the trees, which are shaken, and the manna is then collected and stored for winter to be used as a food or shipped to Bagdad for sale in the bazaar. The manna falls on other vegetation, including grass, but all of it is lost except that which is gathered from the oak leaves. The manna is sweet and is eaten by the natives as a substitute for sugar or honey.

TREE GROWS ON TOWER

A tree growing on the courthouse tower has given Greensburg, Ind., the name of "The Lone Tree City." The tree first appeared in 1871 and has weathered the storms for nearly 49 years. It is still alive and vigorous, leafing out in the spring with other trees and waving its branches at a height of 110 feet from the ground.

This tree is really one of the world's wonders. There is only one other place where there is anything of the kind and that is on an old mill in Scotland, near the birthplace of Robert Burns. Whenever a passenger train goes through Greensburg the windows go up and heads are thrust out. There is much craning of necks to see the courthouse tree.

There were seven trees in all appearing in the early 70s on the tower and an eighth in 1900.

OFFERS HIMSELF FOR SALE.

Jack Floyd, 34 years old, an actor, is "broke" and his wife is in a hospital, crippled by inflammatory rheumatism. So he has inserted this advertisement in a local paper:

"For Sale—Young man; white, fairly well educated; traveled extensively; willing worker. Will sell myself to the highest bidder for a stated period of time."

"I mean every word of that advertisement," said Floyd. "I'll sell myself until such time as I can earn enough to repay the buyer. I'm ready to do anything that is not dishonest, and I want a quick sale, for I need the money for my wife."

Floyd and his wife came to Kansas City from the Pacific Coast a month ago. He lost his work when it became impossible for his wife to continue on the road.

GYPSIES GOT HIS MONEY.

Annie Judge and Maria Yonko, young gypsies, were held in $3,000 each by Magistrate Douras the other day, after he had listened to the story of Antonio de Petro, barber, of No. 10 Union Square, New York. The young women are charged with grand larceny.

Antonio said:

"These two women came into my place and told me to put all my money, $180, in my right hand. One of them started to read the palm of my right hand. I fell into a trance. Before I knew it the women were leaving the store. I counted my money. There was $50 missing."

The women were arrested as they left the barber shop by Detective Stanley. He said he had arrested them several times before, but in each instance the complainant had refused to appear against them.

He said the missing $50 was in Maria's hand when he searched her.

CHURCH ACCEPTS DEAD MAN'S SPIRIT AS MEMBER.

The strangest ceremony of church history in Ridgefield Park, N. J., took place on Easter Sunday morning at the Union Church, an undenominational congregation, when the Rev. Hallam B. MacNeill, the pastor, stood at the communion rail and read the church ritual admitting to membership the spirit of Frederick Hofer, forty-one years old, of 153 Hobart street, who died the previous day.

Hofer had been attending the Union Church for some time and had expressed his desire to become a member. It had been arranged that he should be admitted to membership at the Easter Sunday service, but on March 22 he was stricken with pneumonia and on Friday night he was told by his physician that death was imminent.

Hofer called his wife and urged her to notify the Rev. Dr. MacNeill that he wished to be made a member of the church even though he might die and be unable to attend physically. Mrs. Hofer urged that her husband's dying wish be carried out, and the Easter ceremony followed.

FLIES UP 14,000 FEET AND REGAINS LOST VOICE.

An airplane flight at an altitude of 14,000 feet on March 29 restored the power of speech to H. A. Renz, Jr., twenty-two years old, and a former soldier, who for eight months had been unable to speak above a whisper. His voice, which left him one night while asleep, was returned to normal within an hour, and when he stepped from the army airplane at Bolling Field he was surprised at his own voice saying "I don't know whether I can talk or not."

Renz while in the tank corps at Camp Colt, Pa., injured a finger, which failed to heal and finally was amputated. It is not known whether the infection was in any way responsible for the loss of his voice. In an effort to recover his speech he had his tonsils and adenoids removed. Eminent specialists had treated him for recovery of his voice without result.

As a veteran and beneficiary of war risk insurance, Renz consulted the Public Health Service, and Dr. Charles E. Myenerney diagnosed the case as partial aphonia, with paralysis of the adductor muscles of the throat. An air flight to high altitude was prescribed, and through cooperation of the army air service, Renz found his voice somewhere in the rarefied air above Bolling Field. It is the first case of the kind on record, Public Health Service officials said.

SUICIDE'S SPOOK COMES BACK.

"The return of John Koch" has given believers in the occult here a new premise of truth in the theory of life after death. John Koch had killed himself after trying to slay Theodore Opendaker.

His widow is under medical treatment to-day for shattered nerves. His brother-in-law, Stephen Hannan, has been so upset that once he fainted after a futile attempt to lay the spectre. The entire neighborhood of the home, No. 419 Ferry street, Trenton, N. J., is bordering on panic.

Koch shot himself several months ago after wounding Opendaker. The widow and her four small children have continued to live at the family home with her brother, Hannan, and Mrs. Ephraim Cordwell.

Two weeks ago Mrs. Koch awoke and screamed that she had seen her husband's ghost. The scene was repeated a few nights later. To quiet the excited children, Hannan agreed to sleep downstairs on a couch. The alleged ghost returned and made such a noise, as if by the upsetting of furniture, that every one in the house was aroused.

According to the story related, Hannan decided to stay awake and watch for the apparition. He sat near the kitchen door. He says the latch began to move up and down. As he sprang towards the door, the latch became quiet.

Turning to resume his seat, he found himself face to face with the form of his dead brother-in-law. He hurled a lighted lamp at the vision. The lamp hit and dented a wall. A second lamp was flung, and then, shrieking, Hannan fell unconscious.

RAW ONIONS GREAT AID TO DIGESTION.

By experimenting on dogs, Dr. E. Wilbrand of Munich has proved that raw onions have a most favorable effect upon digestion. Reporting on his experiments to the Muenchener Medizinische Wochenschrift, he says the onions markedly retard digestion and increase the acidity of the gastric juice.

From these facts he deduces that if, in a normally functioning stomach the food is subjected for a long period to a markedly acid gastric juice it enters the intestine in a more thoroughly digested condition, and we may assume that no portion of the chyme entering the intestine has escaped contact with the gastric juice. Consequently bacteria that have entered the stomach with the food are more likely to be killed.

Aside from the direct effect of the raw onion juice on the bacterial flora, its action as a prophylactic against intestinal diseases of bacterial origin is thus established, since it is well known that gastric acid constitutes the main obstacle to the development of certain bacteria that enter the body by way of the gastro-intestinal tract.

He adds that onions must likewise exert a curative effect on existing intestinal affections, as owing to their action food leaves the stomach in a well-digested condition, so that no extra work falls on the intestine, since no undigested food enters the intestines and becomes decomposed, thus aggravating the already existing catarrhal condition. Raw onions are therefore to be recommended for persons with hypoacidity of the gastric secretion, but are contraindicated in hyperacidity.

GHOST THAT COMES TO PRAY.

A mysterious apparition has been seen in St. Thomas's Church, Regent street, London. The story of the ghostly figure is told by the Rev. Clarence May, the vicar, who asserts that it appeared to him personally. He is partly supported by other people, who state that noises were heard by them before the appearance of the spirit.

"The events have occurred in the course of the last three weeks," said Mr. May. "Uncanny knockings were heard by the caretaker and her nephew, who was with her in the church at the time. She came and informed me, while the man waited outside. No one could have passed him without being seen, but when I arrived the church was empty.

"A few days later my curate, the Rev. John Evitt, heard patterings of feet, although no one was in the church.

"Lastly, at 8 o'clock one morning I entered the church and distinctly saw a cassocked figure kneeling in the side chapel.

"I thought it was a priest. It rose and walked past the altar to the sacristy on the other side. I followed, expecting to meet the worshiper in the vestry. No one was there. The figure had vanished.

"The form was quite normal in size and appearance and had a decided limp. The last two rectors have both been lame, but there is a decided reason, which I would rather not disclose, for the appearance of the last.

"The matter is now in the hands of the Psychical Research Society."

BLAZING COAL MINE UNDER SCRANTON

A red-hot coal bed, ten feet in thickness and at least 500 feet in length, is blazing 400 feet under Scranton, Pa. The fire is located in the abandoned workings of the old Central mine, West Scranton, and is steadily creeping eastward, consuming in its course thousands of tons of anthracite. All efforts of 200 fire fighters to extinguish the blaze have been of no avail.

Seven streams of water have for weeks been pouring upon the burning coal with no apparent result, the water causing fantastic vapors in the white heat, which serve only to hamper the work of the fire fighters, already hampered enough by the heat and poisonous gases issuing from the burning coal.

The firemen enter the mine through a shaft two miles away. They are unable on account of the terrible heat to venture any nearer the fire than 500 feet. A perpendicular airshaft, located directly above the fire and communicating with the open air 400 feet above affords a draught greater than that of the most towering smokestack. Grave danger confronts the men fighting the flames, as a sudden depression in the atmospheric conditions above might send the sulphurous gases backward, resulting in suffocation.

From a distance, with the aid of glasses, can be seen an inferno in which old Pluto himself might luxuriate. There are in a wilderness of fire with low hanging ceilings, wide crevices from which issue blue and white flames. The heat is unbearable.

All faith in the efficacy of water in extinguishing the flames has been abandoned, and the erection of walls to exclude air and cause the fire to die of inert gas is the plan of the fire fighters, following an investigation by a commission from the State Department of Mining. Concrete walls four feet thick are being built in all tunnels and crevices leading to the fire.

In sections of adjacent veins remote from the scene of the fire temperatures of 170 degrees Fahrenheit have been recorded.

The abandoned mines of the People's Coal Company, communicating with the central mine, where the fire is located, contain large quantities of gas. If the fire should come in contact with this gas an explosion would result the effects of which are incalculable, according to experts. There is no immediate danger of this, the experts add comfortingly, and it is predicted that within a few weeks, through the present method of fighting the flames, the fire will be smothered.

MAY HEAR HEART BEATS HUNDREDS OF MILES DISTANT

An amplifying apparatus described as so delicate as to permit a physician to make a stethoscopic study of the heart action of a patient hundreds of miles away, was demonstrated today to a group of army and civilian medical men at the army signal corps laboratories. The principle involved is similar to that used in transmitting President Harding's inaugural address to the great crowd that extended far beyond the ordinary reach of the human voice.

The demonstration was directed by Brig. Gen. George Squier, chief signal officer. The stethoscopic apparatus with electrical connection was placed over the heart of one of the laboratory assistants and the heart beat was amplified many thousands of times, emerging through a phonograph horn to be heard distinctly and studied by the physicians in a room some distance from that in which the subject was located.

The device may be used in connection with any telephone wire and will function, it was said at the laboratory, as far as the telephone wires will transmit the voice in ordinary conversation.

"A special heart transmitter has been designed which rests by its own weight over the patient's heart," said General Squier, in describing the apparatus. "The passage of the blood through the different valves of the heart causes vibrations in an air chamber which faithfully reproduces all of the various actions. These are transmitted over the wire to an amplifying apparatus attached to a large horn, which projects the sounds throughout the building."

TAKE NOTICE!

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. Here are the latest numbers:

NO.

32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector J. Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trailed by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieutenant Robert W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "Sanctuary," by William Hamilton Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Charles F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura Reid Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by Wm. Hamilton Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by Beulah Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by Ethel Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by William Hamilton Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by Caroline Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by Chas. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by Wm. Hamilton Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue in the Dark Room," by Hamilton Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by Ethel Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. Hamilton Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thos. J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Andreen.
74 "The Wonder Girl," by Ralph Cummins.
75 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
76 "The Spirit Witness," by Chas. F. Oursler.
77 "The Little White Room," by Marc Edmund Jones.
78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by William Kofoed.
80 "A Keyless Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie.
81 "Professor Satan," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
82 "Who Killed McNally?" by Beulah Poynter.
83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
85 "A Clue of Flame," by Jack Bechdolt.

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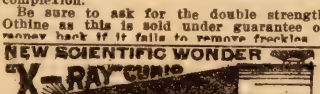

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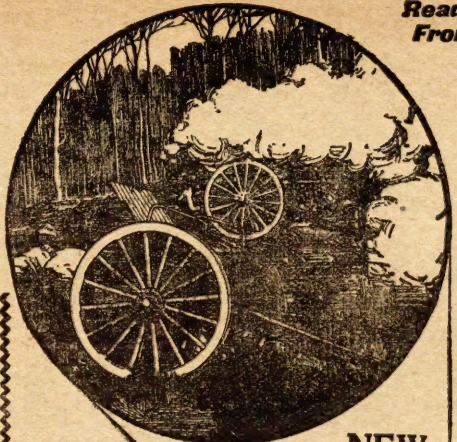

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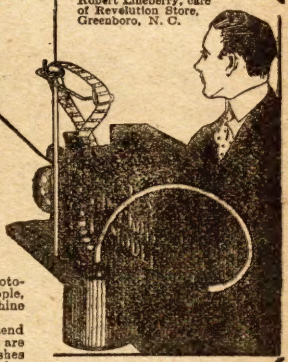

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It has been proved in very many cases that hair roots did not die even when the hair fell out through dandruff, fever, *alopecia areata* or certain other hair or scalp disorders. Miss A. D. Otto reports: "About 8 years ago my hair began to fall out until my scalp in spots was almost entirely bald. I used everything that was recommended but was always disappointed until at last I came across Kotalko. My bald spots are being covered now; the growth is already about three inches." G. W. Mitchell reports: "I had spots completely bald, over which hair is now growing since I used Kotalko." Mrs. Matilda Maxwell reports: "The whole front of my head was as bald as the palm of my hand for about 15 years. Since using Kotalko, hair is growing all over the place that was bald." Many more splendid, convincing reports from satisfied users.

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HOW TO DRIVE A SCREW INTO WALL

Housekeepers who live in houses with concrete, brick or stone walls usually find very difficult to hang pictures or brackets in their rooms even when they have succeeded in drilling or chiseling a hole in the concrete or brick, writes E. J. Holmes in the Popular Science Monthly.

Electricians who are called upon to attach electric light fixtures to such walls usually drill holes, fill them with lead and fasten the screws in the lead. Sometimes they use what is called expansion sleeves, which are so designed that the screw, as it screwed into the sleeve, causes the part of the sleeve furthest away from the surface to expand, thus taking firm hold of the surrounding concrete or brick.

This furnishes an excellent substitute for lead filling or expansion sleeves. The hole should be drilled to the depth of at least 1 inch and wide enough to hold a sufficiently large screw. Then place a wad of steel wool in the hole and drive your screw through the wool into the hole. You will find it impossible to pull a screw fastened in this manner out of the hole with your hands.

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